

FORWAO'S CHRONICLE OF

REALMS

Wair-Rae



UNAE BOOK ONE BY COLIN TABER

FORWAO'S CHRONICLE OF
WAIR-RAE
UNAE BOOK ONE

CREDITS

Writer
Colin Taber

Additional Text
Lee Sheppard, Adam Spargo and Adam Whitt

Editor
Nick Leaning

Cover Art
Shaun Tan

Interior Art
Danny May, Greg May, & Karen Ogden

Cover Design & Typesetting
Vindaloo Design Studio

First Published in Australia in 1996
by Australian Realms
PO Box 220, Morley
Western Australia 6943

Copyright © Australian Realms 1996

All rights reserved. No parts of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior consent of Australian Realms excepting the maps which may only be so reproduced strictly for personal use.

Any mention of business names, game names or other trademarks is not a challenge to the ownership of any trademark or copyright.

INTRODUCTION

Unae has lived a long, long time. It has seen over four years of life in print in Australian Realms magazine alone. With this book it has been liberated from that great magazine's pages to its own. Within six months of its release in a serialised form in Realms Unae was the second most popular fantasy campaign world in Australia, given another year and it was the most popular in the nation.

Now Unae is played all over the world, in Europe, North America even Africa. Unae has truly become a world unto itself.

Unae takes many of the cliches of adventure roleplay gaming and turns them on their heads. Unae is a dark fantasy campaign world of grim realities. A world largely shaped by another, one full of gamers. The readers of Unae and Australian Realms, combined with the writers, editors and artists of the Unae project have jointly created this place. A place seething with energy and passion, a place like no other.

Enjoy what is essentially *your* world regardless of what the elves may claim.

Colin Taber
14 August 1996

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Many of you who are reading this will be familiar with the fantasy world of Unae and how it has unfolded in Australian Realms magazine. To you I offer the warmest welcome I can, knowing that some of you have been waiting nearly three years for this, the first Unae book to appear. To other readers who are perhaps wondering what it is, how to use and why the readers of Australian Realms have become so taken by Unae I offer this knowledge.

Unae is a generic world, all the source information you need to run a fantasy role playing game in this setting is included in this book. Using the rulebooks of your favourite game, whether it be the **Advanced Dungeons & Dragon** game, **GURPS Fantasy**, **Warhammer Fantasy Role Play** or another system, you will be able to use the exciting source material presented here. It need take no extra work and no extra time. What we present here is a campaign background, major storylines and hundreds of adventure ideas. It is when caught upon these hooks that your players will gain a taste for the gritty realism and gripping fantasy that has made Unae the success it is today.

Unae is a campaign world that is not static, with every issue of **Australian Realms** magazine two months pass in the world of Unae; intrigues unfold, politics wanders its dirty trails, conspiracies approach their climax, a great war is coming and adventure beckons. While this book can be used by itself, we suggest following the storylines in Australian Realms magazine which narrate the drama and events of this carefully crafted world in a way no other magazine does. This book can be just an interesting tale, it can be just a hazy background, or the nucleus of a story, but it can also be the beginning of a campaign that follows the major storyline, that of the *Final Dominion* which will see completion in Realms over the next four years.

We believe this book is a valuable one, in fact a treasure. But, its full worth can only be realised by you.

Come and play, Forwao is waiting...



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2	COLONIES OF WAIR-RAE	36
		<i>Serhaem, Lae Ossard, The Kalraith Colonies, The Southern Colonies</i>	
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK	2	KAID-ONOR	41
		RUMOURS	41
FORWAO's LETTER	4		
ANATOMY OF AN ELF	5	TOMORROW	42
		THE COMING FINAL DOMINION	44
		FAITH IN THE KING	44
		MEANING OF THE WORD UNAE	44
YESTERDAY	6		
ELVEN DESTINY	8	FAITHS, CABAL &	
<i>The Battle of Ansilsae, After Ansilsae</i>		THE SISTERHOOD	46
ELVEN PROPHECY	9	MAGIC IN UNAE	48
<i>A History of Rises & Falls, The Chronicle, Truth in Elven History, Dawn of the Elven Nation, Morality</i>		PASSION, FAITH & INTUITION	48
THE FIRST DOMINION: QUO UNGRIA	11	<i>The Heart, The Soul, The Mind, Politics of Magic, Magic Artifacts, Types of Magic</i>	
<i>Reclaiming the Sea</i>		THE FIVE FAITHS	50
THE SECOND DOMINION: KALRAITH	12	<i>Faith in Wair-Rae, Hidden Agendas</i>	
<i>From the Ashes, The Sixth Faith</i>		THE KINREDA	50
THE THIRD DOMINION: JHAE DALIN COR	13	<i>Culann: Father of Craftsmen, Pennardum, Dylann: Friend of Healers, Teteri: Keeper of Nature, Andrasta: Lady of War</i>	
<i>The Cabal & Sisterhood Emerge, Grae Jenn's Curse, Dawn of a Golden Age, Changing the World, Founding of Kaid-Onor</i>		THE SIXTH FAITH, TERURA KALA	54
THE FOURTH DOMINION: WAIR-RAE	15	THE FIRST FAITH	54
<i>The Fourth Rise, Short-Lived Paradise, New Moon's Night, The Fourth Fall</i>		THE WAIR-RAE CABAL	55
THE FIFTH DOMINION: NEW WAIR-RAE	17	<i>Aims of the Cabal, Factions: The Bloods, The Elementalists, The Assassins, The Blues, The Spirits</i>	
		KAID-ONOR CABAL	56
TODAY	18	THE WAIR-RAE SISTERHOOD	57
NEW WAIR-RAE	20	<i>The Aims of the Elven Sisterhood, A Royal Conspiracy</i>	
<i>The Noble Houses, Merchant Houses, Government, High Queen Caree, The Royal Successor, The Royal Treasury, Crime & Punishment, The Military, Foreign Policy, Religion, Trade, Currency, Languages, The Calender</i>		COMMON MAGIC	57
THE LAND OF WAIR-RAE	28	ELVEN ARTIFACTS	58
YAMERE	28	<i>Skull of Sena Kalma, Iskadae Armour, Nanion Naskae, The Sword of Andrasta, Merrae's Bow</i>	
<i>The History of Yamere, The People of Yamere, The Politics of Yamere</i>			
HIGHLIGHTS OF YAMERE	31	SECRETS	60
<i>The Arena, Finsilsa Lake, The Markets, King's Market, Avenue of Temples, Avenue of Magic, Mercantile Mile, The Dockside, Old Yamere, Old Finsilsa, Old Serhaem, The Graves, Pasinotis Tower, Velsana Vale, The Pool of the Past, Kinreda Square, Festival Square</i>		GENOCIDE	62
THE DARK SIDE & KULTS OF YAMERE	33	THE FIFTH WAR	62
PILLAR CITIES OF WAIR-RAE	34	THE SISTERHOOD	62
<i>Lae Bareth, Akermanis, Rumaza, Milcama, Markae, Andrin Lae, Eccucanna</i>		THE GARGOYLES	63
OTHER CITIES OF WAIR-RAE	36	THE STAIRS	63
		INDEX OF MAPS	
		WAIR-RAE	27
		YAMERE	30
		THE KALRAITH COLONIES	38
		THE SOUTHERN COLONIES	40
		THE DORMETIAN REGION OF UNAE	45



*To His Exalted Excellency
Lord of Medina
Kaleel Qadir
Most Powerful of Evora*

Dearest Kaleel,

In this, the most secret and important document that has ever spilled from my pen, I demand your attention.

I, Forwao, feel duty bound to break the ultimate trust placed in me by High King Caemarou of Wair-Rae. All my life I have been his servant, his follower, his confidante... entirely his. But now I must betray him. A brain fever that has plagued His Majesty for decades has finally won the battle for his mind. I cannot sit idly by and watch him unleash such an unjust and untimely armageddon upon Unae. This blasphemy, that my blinded elven brothers and sisters have accepted as divine truth, must not come to pass.

Here, for those not of Wair-Rae I record the history of my proud nation and people so that it can be better understood, and so that the horrific events to happen over the coming years can be better prepared for.

My dearest friend, distribute this work as widely as you can, but please destroy this personal note I have included. In so doing you save my life, in reading the following you save your own. In distributing this work you may yet save Unae from the armageddon that may see the birth of the Fifth and Final Dominion... or the death of us all!

Sincerely Yours,

Forwao, The Chronicle of Wair-Rae

While my friend Foruwa would probably not approve of this inclusion I have, as matter of common sense and completion, distributed with his book of warning copies of the following brief essay written by Karl Breugel, a Fleet surgeon and cabalist. - Kaleel Qadir

On The Anatomy Of An Elf

Elves have an average height of just shy of two yards, both male and female achieve the average. While having extra height, they are also often of a slender build, this natural liteness is what gives them a look and reputation for natural grace and style.

The average elf will weigh as much as the average human, even though their extra height would suggest otherwise. Elves on a whole have much denser muscle tissue and very strong bones which are, strangely, much lighter than those of man. With denser muscles, more height, similar weight and a natural gift for grace elves make very good athletes, acrobats and warriors. They are not only naturally gifted but also trained from birth to use their natural characteristics to their utmost benefit.

The myth of elven strength, dexterity and balance is just that, a myth. It is instead a plain fact of life that elven culture places a higher value on fully developing their bodies and minds to its highest possible level than our human society's. I suggest that this is a natural result of the elven mind set which matures over a much longer life-span than humanity. The average elven life-span is 225 years.

Elves, like all other races on Unae, cannot crossbreed with the other civilised races. The documented cases of clandestine experiments, or incidents of rape, or even the thankfully much more gentle cases of interracial love, have proven that no offspring will result from the crossing of elf and man, dwarf and man, elf and ogre or man and orc. A result that seems surprising considering the ability of each race to conduct sexual relations with the each other and the similarities between us all.

The internal elf is a wonder to human science. So similar to human anatomy, but so tantalisingly different. I have dissected several specimens and always found the experience fascinating. And of course the special organ they hold makes the exercise rewarding for certain classes of person. To some who study such things, particularly those with low morals, dissecting elves becomes an addiction, a habit which can only be fed by a fresh supply of cadavers, many still warm when they arrive. Indeed, the docklands of many human cities are no longer safe for a lone elf at night.

The elven brain is larger than that of its human counterpart by over a tenth, particularly the frontal lobe and the cortex which are fully one quarter larger than the comparable human components. This may explain in part the ease in which elves can wield arcane, mystical and divine magic.

Elves have a different muscle structure to that of man. Its density, the apparent strength of the fibre, and the way it connects to the elven skeleton means that it seems a much more efficient set up to that of man. One weakness the elven musculature has is the fragility of the fibres; while they are long lasting and very efficient they are not as tough as that of a man, bruising easily and tearing readily. This may be another reason for elven society's addiction to physical fitness, which surely cuts the number of injuries and incapacities that would otherwise occur if the elves adopted a lifestyle of sloth.

The internal elven anatomy holds many subtle differences in organ size and shape, but generally they can still be considered very similar to other races. The major difference internally is the "Naskae", a misty-blue sphere around one inch across that can be found above the genitalia directly in front of the spinal cord. This organ is not connected to any other part of the body and appears to gather the essence of magic that passes through the elf during its life, becoming a ready source of power to them. This may be why the elves have a good deal more cabalists, priests and mystics per head of population than any other race. I've heard tell that the elves believe this organ holds their soul (hence the term Soul Pearl), a material double for their celestial spirit. Whatever the truth, this globe can readily be used by those who know how to power magical castings, another reason why lone elves often disappear from human ports.

In summary, while elves are marginally stronger and dexterous than humans, they lack the robust toughness and constitution of humanity. Likewise, in the mental sphere, their larger brain makes them more prone to leadership, intelligence and magic than humans, yet interestingly this advantage doesn't reflect in their willpower, which is somewhat lacking and perhaps also their wisdom.

Yesterday

Yesterday we walked a road with many forks. It was a lonely road, one marked before us by the gods. It was a road that we dared not leave.

Behind my steps trod a hundred million others. I, and every elf who had lived before me walked that road, that divine road, Yesterday's Road. Behind me also walked the elves of tomorrow. Strong in numbers, determined in will, pure of heart and clear of mind. We marched seemingly forever onwards.

Ours was a march from chaos to order, to the Final Dominion. A journey escaping the carnage and anarchy of Velsana, the home of our race and an overcrowded pit of feuds, war and suffering. After cutting every tree, eating every fruit, hunting every animal, drinking every drop of pure water and stripping the land to worthless bedrock nothing remained. That tired, exhausted land made us what we are today. Hungry and insatiable.

Yesterday, once we had escaped Velsana we created the first four dominions. Each rose and fell. Each declaring an elven weakness. Each bringing us closer to the Final Dominion.

Yesterday we were still marching on that lonely road. Ahead can be seen the distant forms of our gods, waiting at the end of that long road. Occasionally someone stumbles, some lose their way and stray from the road and are never seen again. Fights start that usually fade out as soon as they begin, other times there are thousands lying cold and still in the road's gutters. We have not long to go, but still there is dissent. Always dissent. I pass over an ancient elven lady, from her attire I suggest the head of some grand house, yet she has a knife in her back, a slit throat, a knife in her stomach and poison leaks from her cold mouth.

Yesterday we were slaves to war and anger, as today finally brings us closer to the end of the road we seek to resolve these failings. By tomorrow we must be ready to meet our gods, lest they cast us off their road forever!



Our history stretches far back, far beyond that of any of Unae's other races. At a time when humans were still hunting with the aid of crude stone and wooden weapons the first elven villages were beginning to work metals. While humans, halflings, ogres, orcs and dwarves were trading blows we elves were trading goods. Later many of these fledgling elven villages would become Unae's first towns, a few the first cities.

It was at this time, the dawn of civilisation, that hungry minds first looked upon the world with questions. And answers.

Intuition, instinct and urge still controlled much of Unae, but intelligence, wisdom and enlightenment had also taken root.

ELVEN DESTINY

History tells of the elven race coming from an island continent, the long lost land of Velsana. Here, isolated from the rest of Unae, elven culture was swift to advance, but not peacefully. The earliest era of elven society was one of constant conflict. Endless war embroiled my people. The blood and flames of battle forged us into the steel that we now are.

Overcrowding ruined Velsana. As population grew so too did prosperity and peace, but inevitably our growing numbers became unsustainable. Velsana had been a paradise, but after centuries of war and overpopulation it became a decrepit wasteland as predicted by the legendary savant, Sena Kalma. Despite her being forcibly silenced and executed, Sena Kalma's prophesies of overcrowding and gross degradation in Velsana came true.

After decades of civil war that had divided Velsana into the camps of two high kings, a crossroads was reached. Everything on both sides of the conflict was poured into the war effort; the produce of the soil went to feed the military; deep ores were dug out and forged into weapons; children born to loving parents were raised and trained, only to be sent off to die in battle. Velsana was stripped of its many gifts. And yet still there was no victor.

King Kel Nagra, tiring of the stalemate, challenged King Dia Albi to open battle on the plains of Ansilsae. The challenge was accepted. The Sisterhood promised both kings salvation and an end to the deadlock.

ANSILSAE

The Battle of Ansilsae is the formative moment in our long history. On that day the gods revealed their divine plan for us, their chosen, the elves. To us they promised all.

The battlefield was a grassy plain beside a dull white sandy beach. The day was of calm but bleak weather, the watching sea strangely quiet. Upon the field lay half a million dead, at each end of the field a further half million grimly prepared to wade into the bloody heart of war. And for what? The egos of a few charismatic leaders. The gods looked upon their children with growing fury in their hearts. The slaughter must end. One final chance would be given. Only one. Their children had come of age and the road ahead was narrow, any who strayed would be forever destroyed.

During a lull in the battle the High Priests of the elven faiths were given a vision. As they sank into a divinely inspired trance the priests saw the world teeming with life, such diversity, such

numbers, such vitality it thrilled them. But they could see no elves. The High Priests appeared to each other in the shared vision, each searching for the children of their gods.

Where were the elves?

The High Priests joined forces and raced across Unae with divine speed and celestial wings.

Where were the elves?

The other races of Unae thronged in vast numbers and diverse cultures. When asked none of them knew of the elves, none had ever heard of them.

Where were the elves?

Urgency gripped them as the High Priests used their celestial wings to fly high above these foreign lands. With spell speed they followed the sun into the west. Far out amidst the deepest ocean was an island continent, Velsana! They flew as quick as they could, finally they spiralled down towards the island, gliding to where elven cities could be seen, their spires and pillar-towers rising above the lush greenery of Velsana's forests and jungle. The High Priests grew concerned, the forests of Velsana had long since been felled for timber. The vision must be showing them their homeland in the past, but no, their people's cities were here... this was a vision of the *future*.

The High Priests landed in the middle of a ruined market square, the city was deserted and now being taken back by the jungle. Great cracks striped the shattered buildings that still stood, many others had collapsed outright.

Where were the elves?

The High Priests sped through the city, but all they found was encroaching jungle and empty buildings. They became separated but after a despairing time of searching again met near a gate leading out of the dead pillar-city. Without a word they followed the long silent road which lead into the dark heart of the forest. The road followed the fall of the land down hill to the sea. Above the sounds of the lonely crying wind could be heard the call of the ocean. As the visionaries came to the end of the road they passed a marker that read "Ansilsae". One of the High Priests voice drifted through the stillness that was only occasionally punctuated by crashing waves;

"Where are the elves?"

Here was every elf and the essence of the race. A field of sun-bleached bones spread before them. Millions slept the eternal sleep of death, so many that the piles of bones made small hills, valleys and even a breakwater along the beach.

Here were the elves.

As the High Priests mourned the doomed future of their people, soothing divine voices called them back to the road. There had been another path, one more narrow than the road to Ansilsae. The High Priests, as one, ran down the unseen road, grabbing at any chance for a different future the elves could take.

Finally they arrived at the summit of a great mountain, and they sat down to rest. In the lands spread below them they became aware of great events.

Observing from their tall perch the High Priests watched the elven race decide on a different course. Instead of marching to the fields of Ansilsae they chose the narrow road. United they spread from Velsana, following the directions of their gods. The elves crossed over the ocean to the other lands of Unae and set about building one unified elven nation, a new dominion. The High



Priests marvelled to see that together, as one, the elven race would rise, learning, as it travelled into the future, from its victories and its defeats.

The gods revealed four successive earthly dominions where the elves would rise to awesome power only to fall each time upon their own swords. The gods promised that if each of these dominions was watched, the great failings of the elven race would be divined and if the lessons were not forgotten they would leave the builders of the Fifth Dominion to become the rulers of all Unae. This was the divine promise given to us elves. This final global dominion would then, under the guidance of the gods, spread its wings to rule worlds beyond Unae.

The High Priests came out of the divinely inspired trance and raised flags of parley. While their kings demanded the flags be lowered the High Priests on both sides rode out to the middle of the battlefield. Passing through the carnage of the battle they were moved to tears and could see that the vision each had received was the same and a divine truth. They met briefly, discussed the vision, and on seeing the flags of parley being lowered by the two kings made ready for whatever may come. The advance began as the holy men reported to each king. In one voice they stood before King Kel Nagra and King Dia Albi and denounced them; "You, by the grace of our gods, have the right to rule over us but not to send us to unholy deaths killing our kin. That alone is the right of our gods."

The High Priests then destroyed their monarchs in balls of fire, with bolts of holy lightning, demands of subservience and commands of death. As divine magic exploded at both ends of the battlefield the advancing troops faltered. On the command of the High Priests the retreat was sounded on both sides.

AFTER ANSILSAE

The first part of the vision at Ansilsae had shown the race wiping itself off of the face of Unae; elven culture, song, dance, art and lore all forever gone. The second part of the revelation showed an alternative future where elves would be the masters of all of Unae should they unite and learn from their mistakes. The priests, deeply moved, took every action to fulfil this prophecy.

Velsana was heavily overpopulated and divided between splintered faiths, nations and factions. Velsana was our birth place, but it had been outgrown. The elves would leave. Behind them they would abandon the past, but ahead lay the world of Unae and the promise of a glorious future.

The gods of the elven pantheon had stopped the battle with the revelation. Their High Priests, united by this shared vision, convinced the elves that the prophecy must be followed. The prophecy, the priests explained, decreed that if we elves were to continue to grow in the numbers that we always had then we must take more land but never again from each other. Miraculously great land bridges had risen from the ocean and the High Priests were able to lead the newly united elven nation east to the lush and open continents of Unae.

Elves left Velsana forever. Legendary Velsana was barred to us by the gods who sent terrible storms, tidal waves and huge sea beasts to destroy the place of our birth and shameful adolescence.

Unity had finally come to the elven race.

ELVEN PROPHECY

True harmony was unknown to us elves prior to the intervention of our gods. The revelation at Ansilsae started our great journey to the continents of Unae and a new era of peace. When elves came to the shores of Unae they found them largely empty except for a few primitives. Our entry into the new world was unopposed. These first few centuries of settlement along the northern coasts were a time of consolidation. We had to learn the ways of our new home; gradually elves tamed Unae's forests, cultivated her pastures, fished the lakes and rivers, and quarried stone from her mountains to build our towns and pillar-cities. The elven race came of age.

During this time the priesthood of the five acknowledged faiths of the elves acted in joint sittings to record and properly define the meaning of the divine visions and prophecy at Ansilsae. After decades of debate and clarification the faiths agreed on an interpretation and each returned to their followers to teach them the truth of the word of their gods, a message held in the holiest of books; the *Kae Ansilsae*.

A LONG HISTORY OF RISES AND FALLS

Elven history since the Battle of Ansilsae is a tidal narrative of ebb and flow, rise and fall. It is one of building Dominions that dwarf in accomplishments any other contemporary comparison that the other races of Unae can provide. The Heletian League, the Prabesk Empire and its colonies, the Dwarven Citadels, the orcs of the Great Steppes, all of these "great empires" have lived only a fraction of the time of the elven dominions, they have amassed only the smallest portions of a dominion's wealth, culture and knowledge. These non-elven empires amount to nothing in comparison to even one of the elven dominions, let alone the series of five which as a whole strides over ten millenniums and untold millions.

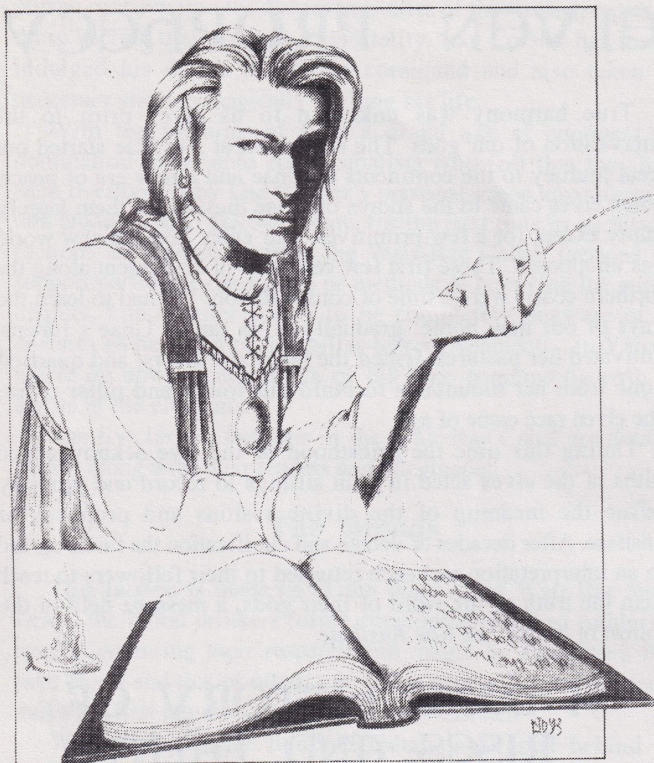
For all the glory of each dominion, for all the blood sweat and tears of its inhabitants - artists, rulers, merchants and soldiers - each dominion has fallen upon its own sword. Such collapse is known as a Fall, and these are the darkest times of elven society; chaotic eras of famine, natural disaster, feuding and murder. These holocausts kill hundreds of thousands, often millions.

This tidal cycle has immense energy, a cycle that other cultures can barely comprehend, let alone believe. But believe it you must, or perish otherwise High King Caemarou will surely reveal the truth of elven history to you in with steel and blood.

This system of rise and fall, though devastating, is part of the elven psyche, it is part of our faith. We believe such trials are designed to strengthen our race for our coming rule in paradise.

We elves passionately believe in this destiny, a fate that was revealed at the Battle of Ansilsae. This covenant was made with our gods. It is written in the holy books of the *Kae Ansilsae* and the *Kae Konsernade* and it is recited to us daily by the holy orders. The Cycle Prophecy, or the Revelations at the Battle of Ansilsae (more simply the *Ansilsae*), tells us that the elves will inherit all Unae with the rise of the Fifth and Final Dominion, *today*.





THE CHRONICLE

The office of Chronicle was established by the Five Faiths. The main task of the Chronicle is to record the rise of each dominion and the reason for its fall in the book called *Kae Senvivas*. According to the Ansilsae the elves will achieve their eternal Fifth and Final Dominion if, and only if, we learn from our past mistakes. The *Kae Senvivas* records these discoveries. The candidate for the position of Chronicle is proposed by the Five Faiths and approved by the High King. It is an esteemed yet dangerous position with many rights and duties, and the Chronicle has many unwelcome opportunities to establish powerful enemies. The current Chronicle is yours truly, having been appointed one year ago by High King Caemarou.

When I came to office I was briefed in detail by *Lu Konsenarde* (the Council of the Five Faiths). According to them and past Chronicles we have already seen three dominions rise and fall - *Quo Ungria*, *Kalraith* and *Jhae Dalin Cor*. The lessons of these cycles have been learnt. It has also been agreed (between the Five Faiths and High King Caemarou) that what is now known as *Old Wair-Rae* was the Fourth Dominion, and this has since fallen. The current dominion, *New Wair-Rae*, is the Fifth and, according to the Ansilsae, the Final Dominion. This is the "truth" that I have been appointed to confirm.

There are sceptics, as there have been in every previous dominion, who doubt this view of recent history. Some of these sceptics claim that what is called *New Wair-Rae* is merely a continuation of the Fourth Dominion. These views are never spoken of publicly, and the only evidence given to support such theories is the lack of catastrophe and upheaval in the Fourth Fall. Officially it is my duty to help remove these doubts. This document that you hold is a betrayal of that sacred trust.

THE TRUTH IN ELVEN HISTORY

Not much of our past and the great dominions is spoken of with literal accuracy. The tragic scope and carnage associated with each of the falls that have scarred elven history have meant that many of the records concerning such collapses and the time immediately afterwards are solely based on an oral tradition. A consequence of this is that much wisdom has been lost, some say leaving elven society doomed to repeat terrible mistakes. What is important in our history is the catalysts that lie within elves and give rise to such mighty nations and the flaws that lead to their decline. While some specific locations and key personalities are well known, to the point of being legendary, it is not this kind of information that holds the treasures to be found within ten thousand years of elven history. This is a point human readers should take to heart; forces, themes and the sweeping passions of the turbulent past are important not names, places and dates. It is the emotional depth of elven history and its lessons which makes the heart of elven society beat, not a monotonous litany of royal dynasties, battles and heraldry.

THE DAWN OF THE ELVEN NATION

Elves have always been.

Since our coming of age at the Battle of Ansilsae and the founding of the elven nation we have never been so unified.

Never were we anything less than members of the most civilised of races, the custodians of Unae and all its treasures, claimants on its future, as our gods have promised us.

Built for glory we shoulder our beauty and intelligence as easily as we carry our aura of grace, the air of style that manifests itself around ourselves and all of our creations. It has been said by artists and scholars of other races that we are sculptures, icons to enlightenment, statues to beauty, offerings to our just and graceful gods.

Such flattery is welcomed, but unfortunately untrue. Yes, our form is recognised by many to be graceful and comely, but an elf scarred by the pox as a child is still scarred. An elf-girl with the terrible limb wasting disease, *Morsan's Rot*, will still be a cripple in adulthood should she live that long. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder; cliches of elven beauty and charisma have been created by others, not the elves.

Our culture, from its ancient beginnings to the contemporary arts of modern Wair-Rae showcases a vitality and style which is forever changing but always undeniably and unmistakably elven. We are masters of the show, the greatest of storytellers, the most artistic of sculptors, painters and weavers and the most passionate of dancers, poets and songsters. Our culture is our treasure, something as alive, rich and vibrant as any other thing to spring forth from Unae's fertile soil or soar in its tempestuous skies.

Elves have watched the growth of all other cultures on Unae and interfered in their development when it seemed to our benefit. The human Prabesk can claim what they will, but the elves were the first and will always be the foremost profiteers on Unae, the



dwarves may believe they are the greatest artisans, but our manufacture is superior, the Ogre Clans may think themselves the greatest warriors on Unae but our armies conquer all.

Elven history is the driving force on Unae. We have guided the progress of all other races on Unae, even when we ourselves were involved in our coldest, darkest winters where the possibility of extinction beckoned as readily as each new sunrise.

It was the elves who forged the brooding and dangerous Flets, who taught the Prabesk the meaning of the True Way, who coached the dwarves in the ways of Arcane Magic and who built our past dominions with the blood and souls of half of the Heletian tribes.

We elves are the closest thing Unae has to a mortal master. We have always been in one capacity or other the power of our world. And will only ever become more and more powerful.

Elves are forever.

ELVISH MORALITY

Some races look upon elves as selfish, arrogant, cruel and even evil. Like all the peoples of Unae the elves are no more good nor evil than their fellow races. Such judgements are a matter of perspective. Elves see themselves as good and just, for this view we are understandably biased. Just as Flets seeing elves as cold-hearted, ruthless murderers is another matter of bias and an opinion that is sadly, in the coming years, most likely to spread.

The elves, just like the Heletians, Saldaens, Ogre Clans, Kalraith Gargoyles, and Ungrian Orcs are not evil, but also we are not good. We fall in between these moral distinctions, just as every creature on Unae does. We are here to survive and do what we must in order to fulfil this vital goal.

As for the claims of the elves being the masters of Unae, history has shown it to be the truth. Aside from the undeniable evidence of our god-given gift, the *naskae*, and of the more debatable divine promise, the *Ansilsae*, the fact is that elves were the first race to emerge from *primaeval* wanderings and have used this primacy to dominate Unae's history. This advantage has, however, to a large degree been taken away in recent centuries. The realities of Unae now are that the *Cabal* and the *Sisterhood* represent the greatest threats to any nation or faith. Their conspiracies and plans are on a global scale, something that is fast matching the plotting of the divine and has surpassed that of the most powerful elven dominion yet to fall, the Third Dominion of *Jhae Dalin Cor*.

In any case the outcomes of modern history will still leave the elves as a major player; our knowledge, wealth and numbers demands such status. Only a Fall would damage such an assessment, and then only temporarily.

The elven prophecy, the *Ansilsae*, is what will decide if the elves are to truly be eternal.

THE FIRST DOMINION: QUO UNGRIA

The First Dominion was the nation of Quo Ungria. While in size it was barely comparable to the larger dominions to follow, it was nonetheless the foundation of modern elven culture.

Eight thousand years ago elven settlers, who had for generations journeyed away from the northern coastlines inland and up into the highlands, created the predecessor of the First Dominion. The Ungrian Confederation was proclaimed by the inhabitants of fifteen mountain valleys that made a compact to defend each other from bandits and orc raiders. Within a century the compact had spread to include four walled towns and over one hundred fertile valleys.

Two centuries after its founding the confederation's elected ruling body of elders was overthrown by King Krae Chea. King Krae Chea achieved this through the support of several key merchant and noble houses to whom he had promised trade and tax concessions. Upon ascending the throne he declared the birth of the First Dominion of Quo Ungria. Holding the loosely regulated compact together was not an easy thing. Having given so much away in order to gain power, King Chea soon realised he had to look beyond his borders to finance his power broking. He was quick to redirect the energies of his restless subjects into colonisation, trade and war. His establishment of a strong central government and monarchy was fought against at many levels and in many parts of Quo Ungria for decades, but eventually, and with the growing aid of the *Faiths* and the *Sisterhood*, he was successful in creating the First Dominion.

With peace and prosperity settling in at the heart of the First Dominion the problems of overpopulation became apparent before the nation had even seen its full third century. Conquest of neighbouring territories held by uncivilised non-elven races and the integration of neighbouring elven communities accelerated in an effort to ease the hunger at the heart of Quo Ungria.

RECLAIMING THE SEA

The elves regard the pinnacle of Quo Ungria as beginning seven thousand four hundred years ago when the elves of the First Dominion gained a firm foothold on the sea. At this time migration had taken the mountain-dwelling elves back into the coastal plains, felling forests on the way to build huge fleets.

With the territories of Quo Ungria fast expanding into coastal elven territory, a decentralised power structure became necessary. Starting as a kingdom of one hundred valleys, it had reached, by its *golden age*, a land that spread well over four million square miles broken into many provinces that were ruled by appointed governors answering directly to the king.

While the dominion rapidly expanded, increasing in size and strength, so too did four internal organisations grow their power. All would become double-edged assets to the king, for as they rose so too did their hunger for power. The *Cabal* of mages, the *Sisterhood* of mystics, the *Five Faiths* and the *Merchant Houses* all would make a claim on the glory of the First Dominion, and in so doing they would bring about its Fall.

Seven thousand years ago elven civilisation experienced the First Fall; if elves are prepared to follow the call of destiny, we must also be able to stomach such collapses, and so we are.

At root, it was greed and envy that caused the First Dominion's great fall. The contracts and agreements that had sewn together the quilt of King Krae Chae's *Great Compact* began to fray around the edges when his descendant, King Grisla Quo came to the throne. As Quo Ungria swallowed the many scattered elven realms the merchant and noble houses in each of the new territories looked jealously upon the many concessions of the highland factions. Bitter arguments arose over these rights and privileges. Hidden behind this screen of merchant bidding, intrigues and infighting was the more sinister feuding of the faiths of the elven pantheon and the sparring of the emerging elven chapters of the Cabal and Sisterhood. By the time High King Grisla Quo became aware of the hidden war being waged across Quo Ungria a full tenth of his dominion was in ashes, by the time he moved to halt the factional fighting the First Fall had begun and was unstoppable.

Whilst the merchant houses and nobility disputed contracts and concessions, the Five Faiths argued over ownership of holy artifacts such as the Kae Konsernade. These struggles were initially repressed by forces loyal to the King, but eventually even the King's forces took sides in the religious infighting, as did the ordinary population. Riots erupted in elven pillar-cities that had only ever seen peace. Before long the involvement of the Cabal and Sisterhood was revealed; according to accusations that are still disputed, these two organisations fuelled the fires of envy by whispering rumours of withheld treasures to all sides. What is not in dispute is the lengths to which these two forces were prepared to go to achieve their goals as demonstrated by the assassination of King Grisla Quo by the Cell Mind of the elven Sisterhood led by his niece, Fae Cor.

Most historians consider King Grisla Quo to be the final monarch of the First Dominion as during his rule Quo Ungria slid into a civil war that lasted eighteen bitter and bloody years. The Sisterhood, and several scholars sympathetic to their cause, consider Queen Fae Cor to be the last ruler of Quo Ungria. She deposed King Quo in a surprise attack on the capital six months into the civil war claiming the throne only then to preside over the smouldering embers of the First Dominion and a million corpses.

What had been a slow period of decline before the civil war accelerated with startling violence, only to then slow and linger as a long and agonising death. What began as a riot between theology students of one faith and the initiates of another ended years later in magical warfare that saw arcane and divine magic thrown with little thought of cost or consequence. What had once been proud Quo Ungria became sorrowing memories.

A thousand years of darkness for elven civilisation followed the Fall of Quo Ungria. It was centuries before the descendants of those who had lived under the name of Quo Ungria and the First Dominion started to hear and accept the name of the growing kingdom of Kalraith.

THE SECOND DOMINION: KALRAITH

While the fall of Quo Ungria was the most turbulent and bloody affair seen on Unae in its age, many times more knowledge of the First Dominion survived than is held of its successor, the Second Dominion. Most of the compiled lore, myth and supposedly accurate scholarly knowledge of Kalraith concerns its rise and golden age, very little is known for certain about its Fall. Even the Chronicle's record of events, the Kae Senvivis, is incomplete, a fact that many find disturbing.

According to elven beliefs elven civilisation has to learn from each fall to successfully achieve the Final Dominion. If such lessons are not learnt from a dominion's fall than the lack of knowledge leaves elven society doomed to repeat its mistakes, breaking the cycle and ruining the prophecy. Those who point to the gaps in our knowledge of the Second Dominion say this is our doom. Others argue that the truth of the Kalraith Fall is fully known by the High King and the heads of the Five Faiths. Whispered voices claim that such knowledge is held in reserve due to its terrible nature, others say because of shame. The dwarves of northern Wairanir claim a lot more is known than is publicly admitted or proclaimed. Here I will not say what I know.

FROM THE ASHES

One of the first centres of elvish population to rise from the ruins of Quo Ungria was the then highland province of Kalraith. Settled only one hundred years before the First Fall, it was the last colony of the First Dominion. As news of the unfolding fall slowly arrived the province was taken aback but unaffected on a day to day basis. The hurt of this news was more of a spiritual wound, a lingering ache in the elven psyche.

The province spent the first few decades after the First Fall watching its borders. It suffered several raids from surviving bands of factionarys - forces from the feuding faiths, Cabal and Sisterhood that had destroyed the First Dominion. These invaders were killed without question. Kalraith, by its rulers' decree and its people's assent, became a closed land.

With time Kalraith grew. Hearing very little from beyond its borders it slowly came to think that it was the last bastion of elven civilisation. With the realisation that the life of their culture, their faith and the Ansilsae rested in their hands, the elves of Kalraith experienced a renaissance in their increasingly comfortable and tamed lands. Slowly, with the pressures of a growing population coupled with a sense of duty, the province established new towns and villages in the abandoned neighbouring territories of what had once been Quo Ungria, and in the wilder lands to the south and west. In time the elves of Kalraith would settle the mountainous lands of Wairanir, called to the cloud-cloaked heights by memories of the heart of their long lost ancestral homelands in Quo Ungria and Velsana.

With the spread of the elves of Kalraith came new contacts with smaller surviving elven populations. In a few centuries the Second Dominion was becoming a reality, it having reached the

mouth of the Raken River and the long forgotten sea.

The territories of Kalraith eclipsed the size of Quo Ungria six thousand years ago; the Second Dominion was born, its rise nearly completed and its golden age begun.

With the widely spread surviving populations of the First Dominion flocking to be re-incorporated into what was seen as a fair and just Dominion, the core provinces, and in particular the capital province, all became very prosperous. The rulers of the Second Dominion recognised the failings of the first and ensured that power was more evenly distributed, allowing its many provinces a high degree of autonomy. Even so, the centre of the empire was always its glorious capital, and within a century of the golden age beginning most notable merchant and noble houses had gravitated to the the grand pillar-city of Quersic Quor.

As wealth filtered into Kalraith from all corners of Unae the sprawling nation continued to extend its territories and influence. Before long all but the northern highlands of Wairanir were in elven hands to the west, while elven colonies penetrated both south and north to the sea, and as far east as the ruined capital of old Quo Ungria. In this period of expansion many races were encountered, most left largely to themselves, whilst others were shoved aside or subjugated according to the needs of their elven governors; the Dwarven Citadels of northern Wairanir were left unmolested, whilst many of the Heletian tribes were enslaved.

After centuries of good living, what had once been a largely democratic and fair system started to collapse. The first signs were renewed feuding between the Five Faiths. The first skirmishes in this new war occurred in the capital during the year long *Jhan Comendis* religious festival when the priesthoods clashed over the right to use certain sacred and public sites. From these trivial beginnings old wounds soon opened and blood was flowing again in the capital of an elven dominion.

THE SIXTH FAITH

Kalraith was at its peak five thousand years ago, its fall commencing after a millennium of peace and prosperity. The reason for the Second Fall is reputed to be unknown, the most common theory is that decadence brought Kalraith low. Those that support this theory point to the acceptance in the dominion's last century of a Sixth Faith known as the *Terura Kala*.

After the fall of Quo Ungria, the thought that such events should be allowed to repeat was unbearable. The selfish arguments and clashes of the Five Faiths convinced many of the more "decadent" residents of Quersic Quor to turn their backs on them. Many turned to *Terura* to satisfy for their spiritual needs.

Worship of *Terura*, in his many perverse forms, tainted the elves of Kalraith and this taint doomed them. What became of these elves and how they embraced their fall remains hidden. What knowledge survives of Kalraith is shrouded in mystery and the region itself is haunted by foul abominations, deadly areas of corrupted magic roamed by savage beasts and strange tribes.

Very little physical evidence remains of the old Kalraith Dominion. Most of the older central cities were destroyed by their own inhabitants before they fled to other lands. It is thought that a mass mania possessed the population in a self-destructive rampage that can only be likened to cultural suicide.

Today the old capital province is a treasure trove of buried artifacts and unexplored ruins. These ruins are inaccessible and very unsafe, all being in the forested north-eastern river valleys of Kalraith, the home territory of the *Spirit Queen* and her *Gargoyle Nation*. Few have lived to tell the tale of seeing these ruins. Here the gargoyles have built their *Troiths* - great jumbled towers of stone, masonry, wood and bone in which they brood and breed in twisted parody of the elven pillar-towers.

THE THIRD DOMINION: JHAE DALIN COR

The Third Dominion was the nation of Jhae Dalin Cor, a dominion that took many centuries to rekindle the elven hunger for power and progress. While the full details of the fall of Kalraith will never be publicly known the basic reasons for the collapse must be terrible indeed. It is estimated by using the sources of folklore, mythology, the Chronicle and the records of the largest surviving city, Dalin (later to become the capital of Jhae Dalin Cor) that up to a third of those who survived the Second Fall later committed suicide. A manic depression embraced the elves and smothered the survivors. This tragic time became known as the *Melhil* (the Deep War) and it extended for over a full century after the fall of Kalraith.

Such maladies of the mind are hard to treat and leave long lasting scars on those who survive. With depression and mania affecting the elven population it would take over half a millennium before a sense of balance returned. Vast tracts of elven territory were turned over to ghosts as slowly whole villages and towns succumbed to the sickness. The whole era of the *Melhil* and the grief and loss it caused can be summed up by elves in the uttering of one chill name; *Ram Silnora*. This pillar-city, that records show to have held over two hundred and twenty thousand souls, one decade after the Second Fall razed itself to the ground leaving no survivors, all in the span of a single day. The manias that raged through that cursed city are thought to have been so powerful, universal and passionate that not one resident failed to take part in the orgy of arson, murder and suicide.

After centuries of suffering, famine, isolation and the *Melhil* a light of hope flickered weakly on the horizon. Given time the elven hunger for progress and yearning for knowledge would feed this feeble flame. The elves would rise again.

THE CABAL AND THE SISTERHOOD EMERGE

While the inhabitants of Kalraith had been isolationists until their growing needs required that such a policy be discarded, the people of what would become Jhae Dalin Cor were completely paranoid. All outside contact for the first seven centuries following Kalraith's Fall was avoided. It was a time that saw the collapse of elven reason. Every stranger was labelled a follower of the *Terura Kala* plagued by the *Melhil*. Travellers were arrested and executed on sight by crossbow-toting guards manning walled elven cities, towns and villages.



The first open contact between settlements occurred by what was reported as "accidental magic". Two cabalists, coincidentally scrying at the same moment, linked spells and with this line of communication were able to exchange information. The Cabal today claim that its members of five thousand years ago would have been in touch continually through the Second Fall and after, only admitting it when perhaps caught in the act of communication. Regardless, after long and exhaustive questioning monitored by the priests and rulers of both cities it was discovered that similarities were plenty, differences few and both settlements seemed to be civilised, trustworthy, and, most importantly, long since over the cold terrors of the Melhil. After exchanging names and information old maps from the Second Dominion were consulted and a convoy of coaches and merchant carts dispatched from the forest city of Quen Huan to Dalin, the city at the mouth of the mighty Raken River.

After the long years of enforced isolation the Cabal and Sisterhood actively sought contact with other closed settlements. Before long trade began in isolated pockets of the old eleven territories. The main centres of emerging growth were Dalin and the Raken River delta, Wairanir, and the pillar cities of Ungria. Villages, towns and cities weary of the fear of the Melhil slowly accepted the turning tide and each following year saw renewed confidence and an expanding mercantile network. Within centuries trade routes had spread across the lands of both former dominions, re-opening all areas except those of the blighted heartland of Kalraith which remained deathly silent.

From Kalraith came nothing. Those using magic who searched the region spoke of a dark presence, the less accomplished went mad from their observations. All who travelled into the old capital province were never to return. Before long the core of the Second Dominion gained a reputation as a cursed place. Gargoyles claimed the ruins as their home.

GRAE JENN'S CURSE

Elven dynamism, skill and hunger for new lands fuelled a period of rapid growth. In time cities, merchants and even the faiths restored the power and wealth lost in the devastation of the Second Fall. Without a dominant centre, however, the rise of the Third Dominion was preceded by war as each competing province and pillar-city vied for the right to lead the new era of prosperity. While many lost life and property this brief age of feuding pushed the fragmented territories of over a thousand kings and lords towards unification.

The most successful of these factional brawlers was King Grae Jenn of Ungria. Grae Jenn was a great strategist and commander, he was also arguably the most charismatic elf to have ever walked Unae. His people adored him, his soldiers to a man would die for him, even his conquered subjects learned to love him. Within a century of his reign his lands reached as far east and north as the elven populations had spread, and as far west as the borders of the equally mighty kingdom of Dalin Cor. Yet he tired of these unending wars; always away on campaign he never had time to enjoy the fruits of peace. In his middle years Grae Jenn became increasingly lonely and worried what the gods would think of his deeds at continuing the conflict.

In Dalin Grae Jenn's main rivals, the Fiquene Dynasty, had been in power since the golden age of the Second Dominion. They had survived this dark era through manoeuvre and intrigue. The head of the noble house at this time was Pilia Fiquene and his youngest daughter, Mellitha, was a beautiful woman with many accomplishments. With such an eligible daughter at his disposal King Pilia saw the approach of King Jenn and his army as an opportunity to forge a lasting peace through a marriage union. It's said he enlisted the Sisterhood to send pleasing visions of Mellitha into King Grae's dreams. Whatever the truth, when Grae Jenn finally marched on Dalin Cor and was offered a beautiful young maiden and the promise of a peaceful merger of states instead of the seige he had expected he was quick to accept.

The wedding was magnificent, the well wishes many, the hopes for the future boundless. King Grae Jenn lived for only a year in such happiness, becoming a father to a strong son, Ygrae, before being taken by a mind fever, a fever that never released its grip. It has long been rumoured, and this is confirmed by the Chronicle of the time, that King Jenn was a well man but imprisoned in the dungeons of Ungria by Queen Mellitha and her family who would not suffer the shame of losing their throne to another line. The pride of the Fiquenes had cost the Grae Jenn everything. With a broken spirit he succumbed to the dreads and one morning was found to be dead.

Before he died, however, it is said that Grae Jenn placed a powerful curse on House Fiquene. Even down to today it is believed that *Grae Jenn's Curse* can wreak revenge for those who have been betrayed, and his restless spirit will come to the victim's aid if properly called.

THE DAWN OF A THIRD GOLDEN AGE

With the consolidation of the two kingdoms into one, even by such malicious means, a new elven golden age dawned. Ygrae Jenn was renamed Ygrae Fiquene and his rule saw the Third Dominion bloom for the elves. The golden age of Jhae Dalin Cor lasted just under two millennium, it was an age of progress the likes of which Unae had not seen before, or since; today modern day Wair-Rae can only dream and speculate upon the wonders that the Third Dominion mastered. Jhae Dalin Cor's armies filled the skies, its merchants plied the oceans, its engineers irrigated the deserts, tamed the winds, and mixed the bones of the earth, and the artists and craftsmen of the glorious Third Dominion are said to have created such exquisite works to delight the senses and raise the soul that even today their fading echoes are heard with bitter-sweet regret.

Elven holdings spread as far north as the ice drifts, as far west as the great ocean, and as far east as the lands of the rolling steppe and vibrant Hindia. The southern borders can only be guessed at, but the great deserts of the south are known to dust sands over elven ruins from the Third Dominion. Incomplete records suggest that elven civilisation flourished, even if only for a short time, as remotely as the Kalian Highlands, an area now known as Burvoy.

When the Third Fall came it was as spectacular a collapse as the dominion's rise had been. Explosive and devastating, it changed Unae forever.





CHANGING THE WORLD

Finally, even with its great achievements, the Ansilsae came to claim the Third Dominion. When the dominion fell, after fending off collapse for such a long time, it was unleashed at an accelerated rate that only compounded the utter devastation and destruction of the event. Within one day millions were dead as the six largest cities of the dominion were engulfed in fireballs that charred the soil. The Fiquene dynasty's internal feuding would within the coming week kill as many again, and have even greater consequences for the world as a whole. The cause; pride.

Pride in elven mastery of natural and magic forces had driven the Third Dominion to spectacular advances in the studies of magic, the arts and science which resulted in superweapons of incredible destructive power. The secrets of these devices are now long forgotten, but when unleashed during the Third Fall they caused the very sea to rise to disastrous levels, inundating entire cities and nations. The desperate survivors, elven and non-elven, scrambled to higher ground. For the first time an elven fall was not only affecting the lives of subjugated neighbouring nations and races, it was killing them in the millions. The surviving elves made their way to the mountains and highlands of Wairanir, Kalraith and Ungria, knowing that within one or two of their long lifetimes they would be surrounded by the newly stabilised seas. The other races they abandoned to their watery doom.

In Wairanir the fleeing elves stormed the mountain citadels of the great Ogre Clans, slaughtering the inhabitants to the last. Finally, when they were safe and settled they gathered the survivors of their subject nations, taking the shell-shocked folk, fighting and screaming back into slavery.

Much knowledge was destroyed with this fall, along with many artifacts held by the faiths and the Cabal, all lost in the forest-eating firestorms, the mountain breaking earthquakes and the following inundation. The wonders of the Fifth Dominion also brought about its destruction and all were forever lost.

The Third Fall is in many ways regarded as being the most wasteful, with millions of *naskae* lost (*naskae* translates loosely from Velsanan as Soul Pearl - a physical embodiment of raw magical power found within all elves), along with millions of lives and the wonders of the age.

FOUNDING OF KAID-ONOR

With the lunacy of the Third Fall behind them, the survivors dealt with their new lots in many ways. While the majority spent their time rebuilding their lives and culture for the inevitable Fourth Dominion, a large number of elves headed into a huge labyrinth of hidden valleys in the centre of the Wairanir Highlands through a network of secret cave passages. Lead by a charismatic elf named Dhel Vanis and his wife Bans Sildaris, they founded idyllic communities that would turn their back completely on six thousand years of elven history. Here, in Kaid-Onor, disgusted by their heritage they cut all ties with their former brothers and sisters and renounced their belief in the Ansilsae. Swearing to never rekindle the elven urge to war they have adopted a village lifestyle and live in the pristine woods of their lands with many of their number living as nomads.

For the first time in elven history as a Dominion started to coalesce and rise from the last fall several communities of elves turned their backs on the Ansilsae, others also turned their backs on the elven faiths that had delivered such a tragic destiny to them. As Kaid-Onor was born the valley of the non-believers, so too were the elves of the area now known as the Southern Colonies, as they rejected traditional elven faith and began a new life in isolation from the Fourth Rise.

In the south, following contact with the enchanted civilisation of Saldae where nature nurtures the *Saldaens* (halflings) and in turn the *Saldaens* nurture it through the circle of the *Green Way*, converts to this cause started to develop an elven form of nature worship. While not yet attaining the results and power such as the *Saldaens* have achieved, the elves who follow this *First Faith* are working towards these ends diligently.

THE FOURTH DOMINION: WAIR-RAE

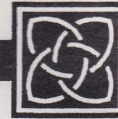
Following the tragedy of the Third Fall which left the sea level high above the now barnacle-encrusted and charred ruins of the old capital, Dalin, civilisation broke down into its most basic parts; a few thousand isolated farms and hamlets, a thousand villages, maybe a handful of small towns, all independent of each other and often separated by large distances, scattered across the territories of their dead past. Even in these dark eras of despair with famine, plague, war and death assaulting the elves on all sides always somewhere within us we find the seeds of the next Rise, planted there by our survival instincts and tended by what elven spirituality identifies as fate and destiny. Even in the shattered world after the Third Fall, the will to continue, to build and to fulfil our destiny was strong. For those with faith each fall brings proof of the truth in the Ansilsae prophesy.

THE FOURTH RISE

Old Wair-Rae grew from the smashed ruins of Jhae Dalin Cor, the Third Dominion. While various parts of Wairanir had been settled as far back as the Second Dominion by travellers from Kalraith, it had been the western frontier and never prospered highly. The destruction caused by the Third Fall, including the drowning of most elven centres and the raging winter storms that took ten years to clear left the western elves completely isolated. Rising waters surrounding Wairanir forced the abandonment of all pillar-cities as the surviving elven population moved to the highlands region which today is the island of Wair-Rae.

As the sea levels stabilised the elves were quick to establish new cities, the first to be founded was that of Yamere, a settlement that would within a century be a full-fledged pillar-city and the centre of a re-emerging elven nation. The priests made it known that the elves of Wairanir were the last bastion of elven civilisation. The divine turbulence caused by millions of elves drowning on isolated ridges and hills as they were taken by the rising seas had been enough to send half of the priesthood insane. With so few fit to lead the flock in the pursuit of the Ansilsae some elves openly doubted the prophecy and challenged its





wisdom. Such doubters were exiled, most finding their way to newly founded Kaid-Onor, the valley of non-believers.

At first Wair-Rae wallowed in self-pity and despair. Manias manifested themselves, tempers were short and tragedies many. Thousands of elves were to walk out of the surviving towns and new cities never to come back. Every day, at the cities along the new coastlines, at least one elf, sometimes an entire family line, would walk into the sea to fate's final embrace.

Amidst this despair, like a curse, the Ansilsae once again drove the survivors to build, to create and to start anew. Soon they were striving for many things, suddenly what had been the lonely, ignored and forgotten frontier of the Third Dominion was destined to be the Fourth Dominion. Faithful elves set to work in a bid to make the spirits of their dead brothers and sisters proud, and to gain the attention of the divine.

After a century of toil the southern two thirds of the island of Wairanir was entirely in elven hands, the remaining northern corner was left to its dwarven owners. Slowly trade was opened up with the Dwarven Citadels, but, as the neighbours to the north were even more isolationist than the elves had ever been, such trade was always a small scale thing and only for the scarcest and most valued of items.

Old Wair-Rae's rise in many ways is unremarkable, merely mimicking the dominions that had gone before it, led by the same fundamental forces that fuelled previous rises. If any particular force was more influential in Wair-Rae's rise than in previous rises it was the energies of the Merchant Houses. Once prosperity settled on the struggling civilisation these shrewd mercantile houses were able to consolidate themselves with the labour of slaves and cunning deals that they used as a platform to expand their holdings, power and wealth.

With a growing population and a need for more materials such as metals, food and timber, time would see the elven tide sweep up the half dozen major river valleys of Wair-Rae and finally claim all available territory. As with all former dominions the pressures of a growing population meant that new territories had to be found or taken. When Wair-Rae had claimed all of the island of Wairanir with the exception of the Dwarven Citadels and impenetrable Kaid-Onor it became a matter of sea travel before other lands could be taken.

Sixteen hundred years ago, two short centuries after the declaration of the Fourth Dominion of Wair-Rae by High King Labraeth, such colonies were being founded. Either by establishing anew old contacts with long isolated surviving communities from the Third Dominion, or by establishing communities from scratch, the rise of Old Wair-Rae had started.

SHORT-LIVED PARADISE

A time of prosperity coupled with the twin factors of Wair-Rae starting with a very small population base and having a large, very fertile and mineral rich territory under its complete control meant that the elven population bomb was something that had not threatened or even materialised as a potential problem at this stage of the dominion's life. Feeling under no pressure, and very comfortable with their accomplishments the early dawning of the Fourth Golden Age meant Wair-Rae slowed, its

progress slowly being stifled and a kind of slothful decadence set in. The use of slaves became the norm for the wealthy, no longer the exception. This lethargy was overcome in isolated incidences of ambition such as the establishment of a port, Serhaem, in the Kramer Confederation (a member of the Heletian League) 233 years ago. This settlement is a merchant outpost and has had, for most of its history, little outside interference.

NEW MOON'S NIGHT

Wair-Rae was threatened by its own success, starved of challenges and losing the elven hunger for control which it had achieved so effortlessly the midget Fourth Dominion started to peak, teeter, slowly turn and then begin what has since been diagnosed as the Fourth Fall.

This fall was temporarily halted by the appearance of the Flets six hundred and fifty three years ago. The Flets are a human people who came from the north of Wairanir where they had escaped three centuries of slavery under their masters in the Dwarven Citadels. Travelling south, free and used to hard labour they were welcomed by the increasingly lazy population of Wair-Rae as a godsend. It would take centuries of working with pay as free men under elven masters for this relationship to sour.

Four hundred and fifty years after their entry into Wair-Rae many Flet families had enough wealth and influence to move into the pillar-cities and deal on equal terms. The only things the Flets did not yet have in the eyes of the increasingly conservative elves was land, titles and elven blood. Angry thoughts became quiet jokes, then polite jibes, soon arguments broke out, then fights on the streets between Flet and elven youths.

On the eve now known as *New Moon's Night* rioting swept the capital, Yamere. The newly reigning High King Caemarou was forced to act, he announced a curfew and ordered the Silvan Guard on to the streets with orders to kill any who would not return to their homes. The guard, being made up exclusively of elves and mirroring the general feelings of the population had decided that the Flet's home was not to be in Wair-Rae. Cheered on by elven mobs the Silvan Guard and city militia fought, chased and slaughtered the Flet population of Yamere regardless of whether they were on the streets with swords or asleep in their beds. Riders were dispatched by the High King to carry the order to all cities and towns of Wair-Rae. The people and their High King had endorsed the murderous actions of the Silvan Guard.

By morning an army was raised and the few Flet survivors were fleeing to their people's towns on the rugged east coast. When the elven army reached the small area held by the Flets they walked straight through the towns, villages and farms until they had killed the defenders in their path or pushed them into the sea.

Fortunately many had heeded the warnings from the bloodied survivors of Yamere and fled by sea. As these refugees sailed out of their ports they watched their homes burn behind them.

The survivors made their way to their kin's settlements on Kalraith in whatever ships, boats or rafts would take them. This terrible moment of Flet history is known as *Def Turtung* (the killing). Only half of the refugees made it to Fletland, that southern area of Kalraith that had been colonised by the Flets four hundred years before.



THE FOURTH FALL

Wair-Rae, the Fourth Dominion, began to wane two centuries ago. The turning point is marked by New Moon's Night, an event known by another name to the Flets, who call it Def Turtung (the Killing). With the expulsion and murder of the second class Flet population of Wair-Rae the elven nation lost a good deal of its labour force. The immediate ramifications for the elven nation was the threat of famine as crops were unable to be harvested by the few elven field workers who had previously been outnumbered three to one by their Flet co-workers. A shortage of fisherman, woodsmen and miners led to problems with the supply of goods and raw materials. In short, while the Flets had not chosen to leave of their own free will, they had once again crippled the host nation that had wronged them, just as had been the case when they were expelled from the Dwarven Citadels.

Old Wair-Rae was a land of wealth and sloth. When the workers were murdered by their masters and the survivors forced out to sea, famine threatened and soon arrived. Tens of thousands died from hunger in the first few years. Riots and uprisings also threatened the normally strong fabric of elven society. These immediate threats soon faded, but others would grow in strength and take years, if not decades to cripple the Fourth Dominion.

THE FIFTH DOMINION: NEW WAIR-RAE

Young High King Caemarou saw this weakness and became galvanised by the need to save the dominion. Being the quick to anger youngster that he was, he is said to have yelled at his advisers one year after New Moon's Night as famine took his people and merchants beseeched him to supply more labourers: *"You're acting as though the Dominion is collapsing! I'll be cursed if my reign goes down in history as that of the last High King of the Fourth Dominion!"*

Caemarou acted decisively. He sent the soldiers of his armies into the fields to work to help feed his people, he moved his ports and markets to better take advantage of trade partnerships with the Prabesk, and he summoned his most trusted advisers, himself included, into secret counsel.

In the coming years a plan of action was implemented. The plan covered the next one hundred years. It was a visionary plan that sought to turn the Ansilsae on its head. In completely non-elven style High King Caemarou sought to make his rule the most efficient ever to grace Unae. He spent six decades cutting costs in any way he could. Any merchant who tried to make a more than reasonable profit was publicly branded a cheat by the High King. After making several merchant houses pariahs the establishment, that had in many ways been responsible for Wair-Rae's malaise due to their own decadence, began to change its ways of doing business. As the next generation of elves, people of similar age to the High King, came through the ranks of the merchant houses they saw the benefits in the High King's methods and enthusiastically took up his ideals. Those who embraced such ideas were led further and further into the royal

court where they could share in the High King's grand vision. Having their enthusiasm fed with tantalising deals, information, ideas and plans they sought yet more and more. Sixty years after the Flets had been expelled from Wair-Rae High King Caemarou had turned his dominion's lethargy into an energy that was slowly powering up and infiltrating all levels of elven society.

Until this point the elven population bomb had worked in the High King's favour. Lowly elven families were encouraged to take up fallow lands and to procreate so as to create a new worker population to feed, clothe and shelter Wair-Rae. At the same time the dominion's military was gradually removed from the ports, fields and many labouring jobs they had been involved in and the High King set them exhaustive drills and plans in preparation for their first campaigns in sixty years.

Years of careful planning set the details of this first campaign whilst the military re-established itself and proper discipline. Due to the labour shortage only the basic functions such as skeleton garrisons in the pillar-cities and royal honour guards such as the Silvan Guard had escaped labour in the fields. The standard troops had been completely deployed for labour and nothing else. The High King told his impatient generals that they would see battle, and plenty of it after twenty years preparation.

As the years past by the plans of war were checked and rechecked. The military was drilled and redrilled, and the High King counted down the days until he would declare himself leader of the Fifth Dominion.

Forty years ago, in an announcement that many still remember with tears of joy, High King Caemarou declared himself ruler of The Colonies. The diplomats of the High King, under his direct instructions, had visited the scattered elven settlements of western Kalraith and convinced them to accept his rule. That threats were made of forceful dispossession is a fact well known in noble circles only. The taking of this land was important to Wair-Rae for two reasons; firstly, the increasingly crowded Wair-Rae needed new territories as its population would be reaching a critical mass within a generation, and secondly, with the taking of the Colonies High King Caemarou could successfully claim that he had finally arrested the Fourth Fall. His claim, backed by the Five Faiths of the elves, was that his reign marked the Fifth Rise, and Wair-Rae, the *New Wair-Rae*, was to be the Fifth and Final Dominion.

Elven destiny is upon us.

The High King has the support of his advisers, the priests who head the elven faiths and the vast majority of the common people in Wair-Rae. The people believe.

The Ansilsae is talked about openly in Wair-Rae, but never abroad for fear of the reaction it may cause our non-elven neighbours. Already the posturing of the Heletians has changed from one of greedy traders to that of caution. From the day the Heletian League state of Ossard was taken in late 515EK by the forces of High King Caemarou many things have changed, with the seven surviving Heletian League states uniformly treating Wair-Rae with a good deal more caution. When they find out that the Ossard Heletians were not the first, but in fact the eighth Heletian subculture to be exterminated by the elves they will only be even more cautious, if not openly aggressive.

Dearest Kaleel, we live in troubled times.

Today

Today we have our lands, our strongholds, the bastions of civilisation and justice on this world. From Ungria to Kaid-Onor, Wair-Rae her Colonies and the city-states of Serhaem and Lae Ossard. Our people spread and our power grows.

Today we have our knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment. We have the tools to build our Dominion and the lore to administer it. We have the strength and the might to rule our lands, to enforce our laws and to make them grow. From the secured mountain valleys of Ungria to the coasts of Wair-Rae and the Colonies of the South and Kalraith, our numbers increase.

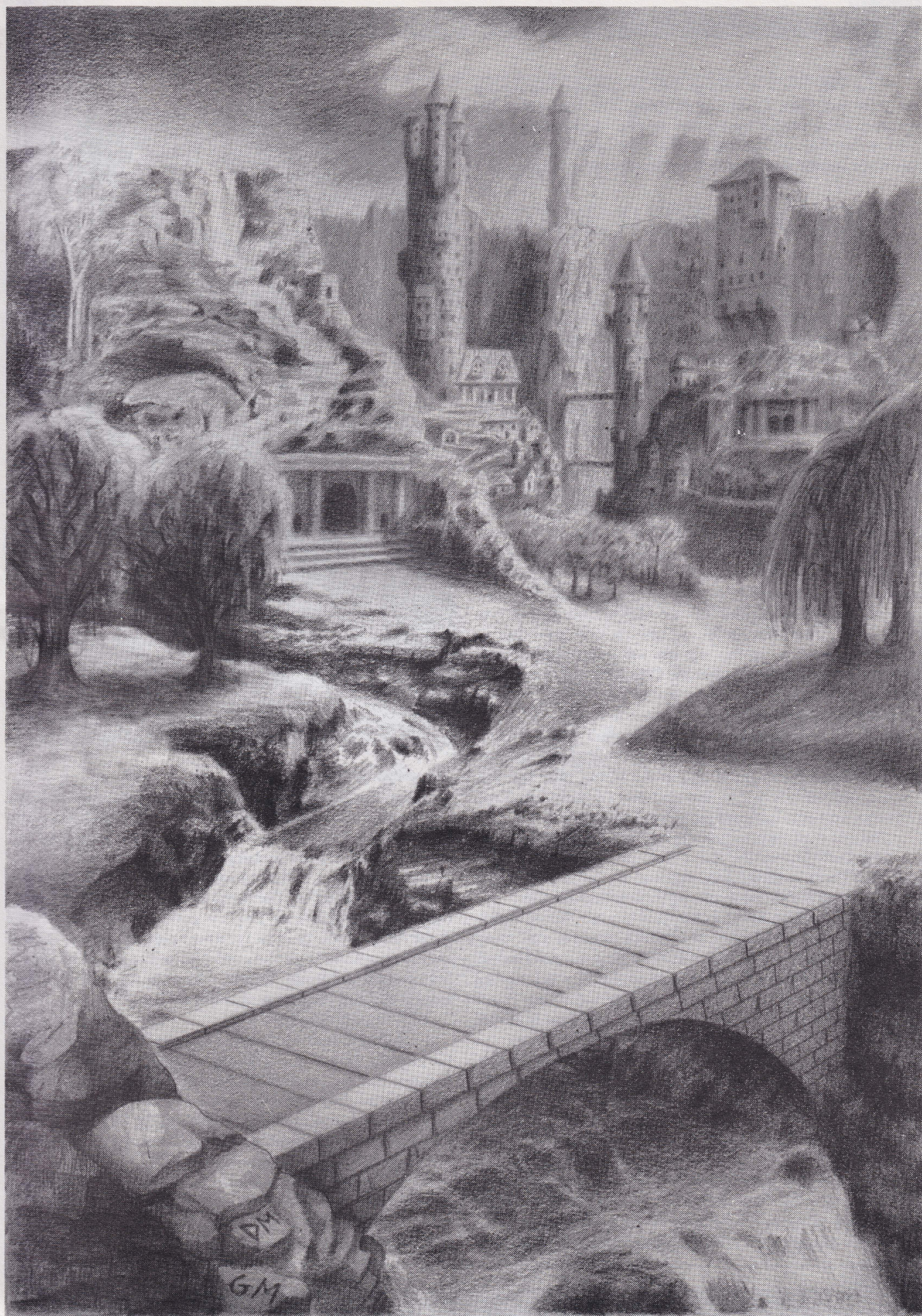
Today our merchant houses spread their wings, the noble houses expand their estates and the armies of the Dominion march to victory in lands unclaimed by the dominions of the past. Our High King's wisdom only grows.

Today we have the faith to succeed, no longer shackled by fear of coming doom. We rush towards our glorious future, our eternal right to paradise. We teeter at a time when the next sunrise may be the one to yield the fantastic tomorrow of prophecy, or at worst just another day of new wonders and prosperity.

Today we have the magic of the Cabal and the Sisterhood working for the good of the elven people, for the future of the Dominion, unfettered by superstition, ignorance and wrong law.

Today we have very nearly everything. Tomorrow we shall have it all!

- Jusbudier Quor Budasa, The Blood Prince



Today well over four million elves in Dormetia believe that the Fifth and Final Dominion is rising. The confidence and optimism being exuded by so many people, who wholeheartedly believe that they are fated to become immortals who will rule this world and the next, is something which cannot be ignored.

NEW WAIR-RAE

There is a nation holding millions that each in his or her own way are preparing to spill from the heartland to claim Unae. This kingdom, this state, this final dominion has been forged by the passion of one man, High King Caemarou. Before one begins to learn of the land and its people, you must first come to know this most amazing man.

HIGH KING CAEMAROU

High King Caemarou has held power for two hundred and four years having inherited the throne from his mother, High Queen Jiradhay, who had reigned alone after the death of her husband (Caemarou's father), High King Wesailyn, ten years before that.

Caemarou's early years were spent in private tutelage across the dozen family estates in the countryside of Old Wair-Rae. His education was put entirely in the hands of the High King and Queen's most trusted advisor; Siverio Merrae. This aged elf was of no noble or merchant house, he held no more gold than an average townsman, yet he was the strongest willed, most independent and charismatic man the High King had ever met. At the birth of Caemarou Siverio is said to have spoken with the proud royal parents asking their permission to leave the Royal Court of Yamere once and for all, having tired of its excesses, games, intrigues, and gossips. The couple, who trusted this man like no other and thought of him as the best of their few true friends, begged him not to leave. It is said that High King Wesailyn went onto his knees and pleaded with Siverio:

"But who shall impart wisdom to our only child and heir?"

After much discussion and a little persuasion the friends parted. Siverio walked away, heading to the estates in the countryside with a wet nurse and the royal babe in his arms.

Siverio raised the Prince as a normal boy, not doting on him and not afraid to punish him, though such measures were rarely necessary. Caemarou as a child exhibited a good sharp and hungry mind, coupled with an unnatural level of maturity and a sound dose of wisdom. Under Siverio's tutelage the young Prince learned that the world was indeed a strange place, and held a lot more in it besides the soothing warmth of his cot.

Occasional trips to Yamere and the Royal Court showed an impressionable Prince Caemarou that corruption, wealth, decadence and sloth was alive and well in the Fourth Dominion, sights that sickened him.

Young Prince Caemarou grew into a strong young man, mastering the arts and skills of archery, strategy, riding and seamanship. He was a willing student with a natural aptitude for physical and intellectual skills, but he was shattered by the sudden death of Siverio (the inquiry into his drowning returned an open verdict) eight days after they had celebrated Caemarou's



twenty-fifth birthday.

Following the death of his tutor Caemarou elected to leave the countryside estates that reminded him so much of his great friend and mentor, finally coming to the pillar-city of Yamere to live, where his entire life was to change.

Prince Caemarou's first years of life in the capital were a time of grief and depression. The Royal Court was a place of secrets, hidden events and factions. The Prince spent his time on the roofs of the Pillar Towers or in parks, always garbed in black. He was not the prince the High King and Queen had hoped to receive from their trusted friend, Siverio. Instead of a worthy heir, they thought they had been given an empty shell.

How wrong they were.

High King Wesailyn ignored his son, and also his own health. For decades he had been fighting a heart sickness that seers, herbalists and the priests of Dylann had worked to treat. Finally, neglecting his daily herbal tonics was one thing, but forgetting to pray at the shrine to Dylann was another. The High King died a terribly painful death in the arms of his Queen and under the dark, seemingly lifeless stare of his only son.

High Queen Jiradhay held onto the throne as her son seemed to be in no fit state to rule. After the matters of state were dealt with, the funeral, and a new balance found in the Royal Court, Prince Caemarou left Yamere. He would not return for ten years.



THE CORONATION OF CAEMAROU

What Prince Caemarou did during the decade of his absence is not clearly known. It is said that he travelled across all of Dormetia and as far afield as Ungria. When he did return it was as his own man. He had been shaped in his early life by Siverio Merrae, after that by grief, and then by his decade of self-imposed exile. When he presented himself to his mother, High Queen Jiradhay, he showcased his true self; strong-willed, courageous and noble. He had been reshaped by his exile; whatever trials had befallen him he had seemingly passed successfully and he was prepared now to take the throne. Within a month of his return High Queen Jiradhay died, passing away peacefully in her sleep.

Prince Caemarou was again marked by grief with his mother's death, but he soon shrugged that off, or perhaps buried it deep inside as he prepared to take the reins of power. His coronation was a ceremony of great beauty and reverence, marked by hundreds of festivals and celebrations held across Wair-Rae. A million swelled the streets of the small elven holy city of Lae Bareth to see the final ceremony where the new High King was crowned by the five high priests of the Kinreda who proclaimed him ruler of Wair-Rae by divine right.

Overnight High King Caemarou changed, throwing himself with all his passion into his new work. At court the attentions of young noble maidens were firmly focused upon him; each noble house wished a union with Wair-Rae's most eligible bachelor, an attention that the diligent and hard working High King found hard to tolerate. High King Caemarou was convinced that Wair-Rae was approaching a terrible crossroads, and he was right. It would be less than a year after his coronation that New Moon's Night took place, the Flet-Elven hatred coming to a head in a series of pogroms that would kill tens of thousands.

As the new monarch tightened his grasp on the affairs of the dominion and pondered how best to use his power he swore to change decadent Wair-Rae, declaring that the Fourth Dominion was dead. Privately he prayed that the gods would allow him the opportunity to build the Fifth Dominion.

Surrounding himself with the best advisors, strategists and minds of the annulled Fourth Dominion he set to work. As famine threatened the common people in the wake of the events of New Moon's Night the High King only planned further ahead and more carefully. Within the century the rise of a new Dominion would be undeniable.

TODAY

It is 516 EK (*Encarnigo Krienta*) and High King Caemarou is two hundred and thirty six years old. One hundred and thirty years ago the monarch was married to a beautiful but lowly titled maiden of court that gave him his Queen - High Queen Carree of the Jenn House. She has given birth to four sons, not a large family in elven terms, but it has been rumoured that this is something Caemarou wanted. The four sons are (in the order of oldest to youngest); Roe Dalmanor - the Royal Successor, Dalsior - Lord of Lae Ossard, Celien - Lord of Serhaem and Jusbudier - Governor of the Southern Colonies.

High King Caemarou heads the strongest elven noble family, the Quor Budasa House. The royal family seems destined to hold power for a good long time as the other noble houses are unable to match them in power, influence or wealth. Only a major upheaval would cause a change of power, something all rival houses are aware of and subtly work towards.

But all is not well at court. It is my personal belief that High King Caemarou has finally succumbed to a mind fever born of deep melancholy that has plagued him on and off for many years. It is in this new world of madness that he now lives, a world that is only being strengthened by the unwillingness of those around him to stop his blooming insanity. He is surrounded by fools, opportunists, kultists and madmen. Caemarou is perhaps the strongest High King the dominions have ever been ruled by. But now, today, none are prepared to question his decisions or stop his descent into madness. I can only hope that he will not drag all of us into the abyss into which he has fallen.

THE NOBILITY

For all of known elven history, even going back beyond the days of the Ansilsae, elven civilisation has been dominated by the Noble Houses. While the stereotypes of elves talks of culture, grace, intelligence and wisdom the truth is that disguised power, greed and a steely resolve to succeed drives us. Even during ages that have seemed to be times of prosperity, justice, peace and comfort shared by all the ruling nobility have held the true power.

The nobility represent inherited status, and amidst their own world of intrigues and feuding is the ruler, the head of the most powerful House. Today that House is High King Caemarou's, House Quor Budasa. Following are the details of the most powerful or famous elven Houses;

The House Quor Budasa - The Royal House. Quor Budasa came to power in the Fourth Dominion just over one thousand years ago, reaching the throne through marriage and fortune when the favoured House Begonis heir was taken by a boating accident leaving a Quor Budasa prince the only eligible become High King.

The family is an old one, tracing its roots back to the end of the Second Dominion in which the family's blood lines was the strongest to survive the Melhil that plagued the long since lost city of Hes Mermae. They effectively inherited a city and all its power. It was during the golden age of the Third Dominion that the House relocated to the lowlands of Wairanir, a move that would prove to be very wise.

House Quor Budasa has made many enemies in its fight to stay at the top, the foremost being House Fiquene. While this rivalry has not yet been exhibited in a direct feud, the simmering animosity is slowly reaching boiling point as the young of House Fiquene move to assert their belief that it is their turn for the leadership of the Dominion. This rivalry has been exacerbated by the marriage of High King Caemarou to Lady Carree of the Jenn House, that same House that the Fiquenes had betrayed when taking the throne of the Third Dominion.

House Quor Budasa is based most strongly in the cities and districts surrounding Yamere, Lae Yamere and Lae Bareth.





The House Begonis - This House has long been loyal to the House of Quor Budasa. Currently its head, Corani Begonis, is an advisor to High King Caemarou, her silent stance at Court being only one side of a many-faceted creature. The House itself is over three thousand years old, it being amongst the first noble house to grow out of the Wairanir provinces of the Third Dominion. Since its beginnings the fortunes of the Begonis' have only blossomed. By the rise of the Fourth Dominion they were by far the most powerful family in Wair-Rae, supplying the first two High-Kings before the threads of fate and marriage let the Quor Budasa take the throne from them. At first bitterness was prevalent at Court, cultivated by the potential heirs of Begonis who felt that they had been cheated of their chance for lasting glory. Such feelings faded as the House built up a powerful inner matriarchy that is suspected by many of being dominated by the Sisterhood. Soothed, the Begonis males worked to assist House Quor Budasa and support them in their rule.

This peaceful relationship could end soon. The younger men of House Begonis, captivated by the notion of ruling the Fifth Dominion, are plotting to retake control of their own House as Lady Corani's health has begun to fail. One hundred and eighty year old Lord Lunaspae Begonis is directly in line and waits eagerly to use House Begonis' largely dormant power in a push to overthrow House Quor Budasa. This is an open secret at court, and several minor yet unpleasant incidents have occurred in recent years when the four princes of Quor Budasa have quarrelled with the young bloods of House Begonis.

Akermanis is the Begonis' base where they claim the loyalty, property or lives of many of the citizens of this closed city.

The House Fiquene - The Fiquene House is well known in elven folk lore as the House that betrayed High King Grae Jenn. They are known for their greed and disloyalty, they are marked by many as holding the very elements told of within the Ansilsae that elven society has to rid itself of to survive. Yet this rich and powerful family persists to survive and thrive.

It would seem that many of the factions of the Fiquene House that were responsible for the Third Fall, including the rising sea levels, had foreseen such events and made contingency plans such as removing their estates to the highlands. When the fall came they were ready with their sanctuaries, the rest of elven civilisation was left to take its chances.

The Fiquenes and their allied Houses represent the biggest division within the Fifth Dominion. They and their allies have active roles in the Royal Court, but also run a maze of intrigues and conspiracies that work towards undermining the Quor Budasa House and strengthening their own positions. It is the opinion of the common man that you either despise the Fiquene, or you are owned by them. There is no in between. Some believe that the house, due to its greed and Grae Jenn's Curse, is doomed. Manifestations of this are already being revealed.

It is said that old Jorin Fiquene, the three hundred and twenty nine year old business man and head of the this strong House has been suffering visitations of late, visitations from none other than the ghost of Grae Jenn. This spectre has come seeking justice for the wrongs House Fiquene committed against him some four millennia ago. His hauntings have not just been the rattling of chains, he was reputed to be the best elven warrior to

walk the face of Unae. On the first morning of every week, in the family's pillar-tower in Rumaza, a dead guard is found, slitted open from belly to groin. Worse, the location of each successive murder is one chamber or corridor closer to Jorin's private apartments at the summit of Tower Fiquene. Such unsettling events are best hushed up, but slowly the Fiquenes are finding it harder and harder to find men willing to be household guards.

The Fiquene power base is Rumaza, they also have a strong presence in Markae.

The House Jenn - Not many familys can claim to be as old as House Jenn whose history stretches back to the terrible age of the Melhil five thousand years ago. An honourable family that has always coveted the more simple and honourable skills of life such as duelling, combat and fair trade. The core of the House escaped the inundation that drowned so many of the older Houses at the end of the Third Dominion by a lucky twist of fate that saw the core family in the Highland provinces of Wairanir on a hunting trip at the time of the fall.

The marriage of Caree Jenn to High King Caemarou has strengthened what has for all its history in Wairanir been a noble house in only name, its wealth and power mostly being drowned by the folly of the Third Dominion. While not having been directly attacked since that time, the other noble houses of the region have always acted to hinder their re-establishment.

The head of the house is a mysterious figure, one Rajis Jenn, a Cabalist. This two hundred year old has advanced his family greatly, helping to arrange the marriage of his older sister, Caree, to the Royal House of Quor Budasa, growing the family's influence and wealth. Since that triumph, Rajis Jenn has become more introspective, seeking solitude and the company of only a few trusted associates, fellow cabalists. Some have suggested that he is seeking to attain the magicks of prolonging life, others have whispered of more mysterious research being done. No-one has seen him leave the family estates around the House's power base of Milcama for several years. Meanwhile the house continues to grow in strength and influence by the hands of his fourteen sons and three daughters who have built many estates in the Colonies of Kalraith. Vicious rumour flamed by the age-old blood feud between Fiquene and Jenn blames the Reeve presence in Kalraith on the younger scions of House Jenn.

The House Filbae Jala - This House has shown little loyalty to Quor Budasa in the past century, something which has only brought it closer to House Fiquene.

The current head of Filbae Jala is Gwendin, a three hundred and twenty year old matriarch who has outlived all of her own children. Many say that she is powered by magic supplied by Lae Corster, others say she is of the Sisterhood, yet others claim there is a divine magic being mined from the old caves of her home city of Andrin Lae. Regardless, she does seem to have found some ally in her quest to cheat death.

Such a long life has made her many enemies, at least a half of them within her own House where many factions are based on the twelve generations that have been born since she first took her place as head of the family. Filbae Jala is strong and wealthy, Gwendin is cunning and evil. The House is a powder keg, and its pillar-tower estate in Andrin Lae the centre of many plots.





The House Silvana - The Silvana are the first merchant house to successfully be accepted within the noble house ranks in four thousand years. At first brought into the fold as faction building blocks by the nobility, the Silvana were able to cement their position and then stay by their own will and power.

Largely regarded as neutral to the factions at the Royal Court House Silvana is actually part of the Fiquene camp. This presents a grave danger to the High King as Silvana has a great deal of influence with several other of the merchant houses who also aspire to noble titles.

The new head of the House is Hendio Silvana, a sinister young man of eighty-four who is suspected of murdering his parents, brothers and sisters after a bizarre series of accidents and early deaths purged his family of all rivals.

Hendio has twenty of his own children who have now come of age and he spends much of his time passing on his ruthless traits to them, working with their aspirations and motivations.

The Silvana first made their money in the trade of opals and other rare gems, many taken from the areas surrounding Eccucanna and Rumaza where the family is based.

MERCHANT HOUSES

While merchant houses often hold an incredible amount of power and wealth, they lack the *blood* of the noble houses. Below the Royal House can be found the nobility and their houses, below them can be found the sometimes disrespected merchant houses. While several merchant houses have, over time, climbed into the ranks of the nobility, none of these houses yet pose a serious challenge to the established noble powers. A merchant house has never ruled a dominion, and most likely never will.

Most merchant houses are not interested in the throne, or even court for that matter, except when trying to gain precious trade concessions and permits. These are families who have built their power on commerce. What they consider the frippery and deceit of the Royal Court holds no attraction for them.

The prominent merchant houses of Wair-Rae are listed below:

The House Komae - Led by the twin brother and sister (something rare and special in elvish society) partnership of Sullae and Komassa Komae, this, the most powerful of the merchant houses, is involved in mining, ship building and freight operations across Wair-Rae. The strongest market for them is around Yamere and Akermanis, and the roads in between. The Komae are very loyal to the Royal House. At one point one hundred and sixty years ago their partnership with the rulers of Wair-Rae almost amounted to an exclusive agreement. Slowly such dominance has waned, but the goodwill of Quor Budasa still yields high returns to House Komae.

The House Cantos - Wine making and cereal farming in the Markae districts are dominated by the generously landed Cantos family. This incredibly wealthy family ships produce over half of Wair-Rae, and its vast estates make it the most likely merchant house to next rise to nobility. Led by Aberou Cantos, a one hundred and ninety year old with great energy, and loyal to the Quor Budasa, the Cantos have long been Royal favourites.

The House Jhan - The Jhan House is aligned with the Fiquene and thus no friend of the High King. They are also the dominant merchant cartel in the gem markets of Wair-Rae, plus they have a chain of money-lending offices and also offer insurance on shipping and freight. The Jhan are a very wealthy family, their business exploits always amongst the most secure and profitable. For the past two centuries they have been wizards of commerce.

The Jhan also dominate the small magic market of Wair-Rae, a market that is technically illegal, but runs with the lukewarm assent of the Cabal. It is effectively a service of magical hit men, vandals and despoilers who will use their magical skills against your rivals for a fee.

Head of House Jhan is the aesthete, Kulae Jhan, a man whose collection of rare artwork is said to put the adornments of the Pasinotis royal pillar-tower in Yamere to shame. Kulae uses his vast resources to sponsor expeditions into the shattered ruins of Kalraith. Tales of the incredible wonders of the Third Dominion seem to draw many foolhardy adventurers to Kulae's brightly burning flame, but I doubt many of these expeditions survive let alone succeed in bringing back valuable plunder.

The power base of the Jhan is Rumaza and Markae.

The House Fae Jora - This loyal merchant house is based in Milcama, with a strong presence in Yamere. It has made its money by mastering the skills needed to successfully import exotics and export elven crafts that appeal to the non-elven world. The strongest markets for the Fae Jora are Vangre, Nerva, Porto Baimio and Thapsuss. They have also used Serhaem, but this often depends on the mood of the city-state's ruler, Prince Celien.

The widowed head of the house, Luttae Fae Jora, has only one child, a daughter named Salibae who is married to an eccentric sea captain, Daal Kinfaia. It is said that Daal has established trade links for House Fae Jora with that disreputable pack of gangsters from Eamastou in the Kramer Confederation, the Melonis. Even more disturbingly, Daal has taken to wearing Heletian dress and babbling about a miracle worker from the Meloni estate, Saint Elisabetta, claiming that only she can avert the coming war. Fae Jora are deeply embarrassed by these indiscretions, but Luttae refuses to act for fear of losing his daughter's love.

The House Jilbae Kala - This disloyal merchant House has made its coin from a long history of business interests in farming, fishing and gambling. Based in Akermanis, Rumaza and Eccucanna, the family, led by Honnae Jilbae Kala, spends most of its time and energies operating its traditional (established three hundred and seventy years) gambling house in Rumaza, the only legal gambling establishment in all of the Fifth Dominion.

Eight years ago, on suspicion of high treason, High King Caemarou directed the Executioner's Guild to conduct an investigation into the affairs of Honnae Jilbae Kala. Over the six months of the investigation several of the Executioners involved met grizzly ends, but the Guild was finally able to table a thick report to High King Caemarou. The contents of this report are known only to the High King and the Executioners, but it has been noticeable that since then House Jilbae Kala has contributed very generously to the Royal Treasury, a burden which Honnae Jilbae Kala suffers with obvious displeasure.





The House Annomorae - This house is another enemy of the Quor Budasa, it being High King Caemarou himself who stripped the old noble house of its title and estates. The reason for its fall was a conspiracy by the Annomorae to poison High Queen Caree Jenn, something only loosely proven. The Fiquene were also implicated, but no proof could be found.

After consolidating hidden reserves of wealth and cutting adrift many hundred hangers-on the restructured house has resurfaced as a merchant house, working hard at its business interests in an effort to retain some honour and chance of taking its titles back.

Today the Annomorae deal mainly in black market magicks and smuggling and gem mining. Nominal head of the house is the embittered and confused Quadic Annomorae, a two hundred and thirty year old retired general who shoulders his dishonour with gruff senility whilst his six sons and three daughters diligently plot revenge. The Annomorae are based in Rumaza.

GOVERNMENT

The Royal Court is the hub of government at the centre of the Fifth Dominion as well as being a ceremonial venue for the nobility and wealthy to parade in splendour. Amidst the glamour and extravagance at court the deals and favours of high office take place. The High King, his Royal Court and its bureaucracy form a triumvirate intricately interwoven with sticky strands of favour, bribe, coercion and fear, a dark trio of greed, corruption and decadence that threatens to destroy High King Caemarou's reign.

The daily administration of Wair-Rae is conducted by a large bureaucracy that is headed by ministers appointed by the High King. Traditionally these appointments were along noble house lines that became inherited privileges. In the early years of High King Caemarou's reign, however, he swept through this corrupt cobweb of self-serving intrigue and introduced a system of appointment and advancement based on merit. This innovation won the king many powerful enemies, but also it provided him with an intensely loyal cadre of energetic and capable officials. Tragically many of these men have since fallen into the spiral of power and corruption that seems inevitable at court.

Above the appointed ministers are a core of favoured, trusted advisors who mainly reside at the Royal Court. The prime advisors of High King Caemarou are briefly described below:

Forwao - Unfortunately my dual roles of Chronicle for the Fifth Dominion and advisor to High King Caemarou take me out of glorious Yamere all too often. I am generous with my advice, and often not too careful with my tongue, making my views respected, even when not liked. Hopefully my High King does take heed of at least a little of what I say in comparison to his other "advisors" who for the most part are feathering their own nests or too frightened to tell our King the truth.

Corani Begonis - This fine lady who is over half way through her third century heads the Begonis House and should have much wisdom to impart, but seemingly doesn't. She often sits at council rocking backwards and forwards, keeping her thoughts to herself. When I return from my travels and talk to High King Caemarou he tells me of all her advice and wisdom. I

can't say I've heard her utter a word at Court, private meetings or in public for the past six years. I fear she has the same malady that has taken the High King's mind, them sharing tainted advice and making foolish plans.

This could soon well be resolved as the younger Begonis are getting restless. Whispers suggest that an "accident" may soon befall Corani. A change of regime in Begonis House could bode ill for the High King as they have a formidable power base.

Waildormin - Unbeknownst to High King Caemarou his chief entertainer, the charlatan Waildormin, is a secret servant of the Terura Kala. While I am not yet certain which aspect of the foul god Waildormin follows, his faith in this diabolical force is beyond doubt; subtly discordant notes in his music betray the charlatan to my practised ear. I suspect he acts as an informer for the kults, and also injects his own mischief into the affairs of state through the hungry but sick King's ear.

Prince Jusbudier - The Blood Prince's role as favoured advisor to his father annoys his older brother (and royal heir), Prince Roe Dalmanor no end. Will ever the High King take his oldest and most stable son seriously? Surely this is one of the clearest signs of the Caemarou's dementia.

Although Prince Jusbudier's duties as governor of the distant Southern Colonies keeps him from court, he is able to communicate with his father via magicks supplied by co-operative elements in the Cabal. The hot-headed young man constantly lobbies his father for quick and brutal action, suggesting that the Ansilsae can be completed in five years if action is taken now. It was Prince Jusbudier who convinced High King Caemarou to attack and take the kult-tainted Heletian League city-state of Ossard two years ago.

While the prince is a brilliant combatant and strategist, he is also a blood-lusting berserker. A feared opponent in battle, his judgment, when it leaves the battlefield, cannot be trusted.

Lae Corster - The head of the Wair-Rae Cabal is a trusted ally of the High King, the two supporting each other in their deepening old age. Unfortunately this good man is one of the few in the King's inner circle who could give him reliable, unbiased judgments but Lae Corster no longer has the time to do so due to the increasingly active campaign being mounted by disruptive elements in the Wair-Rae Cabal to depose him.

HIGH QUEEN CAREE

Married to Caemarou as part of the schemes of House Jenn to gain power, High Queen Caree has never assumed the position and influence that is traditional to noble women in elven society. Rather she has kept herself in the background; the perfect mother to her four sons and the gracious hostess at her husband's many court receptions. From my long association, however, I know that Caree is a very intelligent woman who has maintained a screen of serenity about her to protect herself from the corruption at court. In these latter years of High King Caemarou's reign I wonder more and more whether Caree has some subtle influence on events that none of us has yet learned.





THE ROYAL SUCCESSOR CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Prince Roe Dalmanor is heir to his father, High King Caemarou. Now in middle age, he is being slowly prepared by his aging father to take the reins of the dominion. Some say Prince Roe Dalmanor is too much guided by the women in his life; these unreliable sources say both his mother and his wife secretly urge him to challenge his father's position.

It has been much rumoured in Yamere that the High King has made secret enquiries amongst the elven Cabal with an eye to extending his life beyond natural bounds. These rumours are given weight by Caemarou's increasingly frequent visits to the estates of House Jenn at Milcama where its mysterious head and renowned cabalist, Rajis Jenn, lives in seclusion. This would suggest that the frustration that Prince Roe Dalmanor and his wife, Princess Jaebelis, have been said to show around the capital is for good cause. What is known for certain is that the Successor Prince does chafe at the knowledge that each of his younger brothers have been given a domain to rule over amongst the colonies whilst he must sit idle in his father's long shadow.

THE ROYAL TREASURY

Taxes are a touchy subject in any nation, but in the elven dominions they are borne as a just responsibility towards the Ansilsae. Taxes are accepted as part of the order of life. Accepted, but not liked. All villages and towns are paid an annual visit by a tax collector representing the Royal Treasury, all cities hold a permanent tax collector and an office of the Treasury that regulates the collection and enforcement of taxes. Tax collectors are given the service of two bodyguards when travelling.

Wair-Rae's current taxation laws are based on three categories; wealth, importing/arrivals and a special category. An annual tax of one tenth of one's income is payable by all, whether they work for coin or produce. This tax also covers inheritances and gambling proceeds. Importing/arrival taxes are tariffs charged on goods brought into Wair-Rae from all non-elven lands. These are charged on a scale of rates up to one half the value of the goods, while non-elven peoples entering the dominion must pay an arrival tax of ten gold crowns. There are many exceptions to this general policy, however, as the merchant houses use their influence at the Royal Court to make special deals for their foreign trading partners. This inequitable system causes both confusion and resentment.

The Special Category tax is a tariff on any who have been singled out by the High King and his advisors as representing a larger than necessary burden upon the dominion. Such a group may be singled out because of a revenue raising agenda, suspicion or genuine fear. Currently the special category tax is charged at the same rate as the Arrival Tax and is charged to publicly active members of the Sisterhood, non-elven people, and all merchants from the Southern Colonies. The tax can be charged by any Royal Treasury representative (including lowly tax collectors) and is most likely to be charged at the gates of any city that the target wants to enter. Evasion of the Royal Tax Code is punishable by heavy fines (upwards from five thousand gold crowns), lengthy prison sentences and, on extreme occasions, death.

The High King's Law is upheld in large settlements by trained and well-equipped local forces of town or city guards. In smaller communities such as villages and hamlets a bailiff has the power to levy local militia. The King's Roads are kept clear of brigands by road wardens; these colourful mounted troops, mostly recruited from the unlanded nobility, are usually highly motivated and proud of their power to deliver justice in rural areas. Both the town and city guards, and the road wardens are ruled over by judges. These levels of law enforcement are backed up by local militias and the Dominion's Armed Forces.

As a rule crime is not as big a problem in elven cities as it is Heletian cities. The reason for this discrepancy can only be guessed at; purists argue that humans are natural born criminals. Myself, I believe most elven crime is committed by better educated felons in cunning ways that keep it well hidden. Stealth not brutal force is the elven way to crime. An important point to make here is that all elves, due to their long lives and relatively short childhood, have a fairly good education, something the masses of humanity can certainly not claim. Fear of harsh punishment also keeps crime at bay in Wair-Rae.

Punishment in Wair-Rae is considered more severe than in other nations by those visitors who have witnessed it. The Royal Court sponsors a College of Executioners which trains and indoctrinates a very talented group of torturers to visit pain on convicted criminals. Mutilation, public execution and death by torture are the more extreme punishments. The Executioner's also deliver more subtle services to the King and have been involved in several secret investigations in the past twenty years or so. The people fear the red-robed representatives of the College.

Lesser punishments include being sent to the Arena or to serve as a galley slave in the Dominion's Navy. Wair-Rae has few prisons; these vermin-infested holes are kept only to house noble enemies of the Royal Court, where the convict is left to rot at the High King's pleasure.

THE MILITARY

The military is under the control of a minister who answers directly to the High King. Until recent years the High King had placed himself as the minister responsible, spending a good deal of his time working directly with his military, but three years ago he appointed his heir, Prince Roe Dalmanor, as the armed forces chief minister. The military has three main divisions; the Dominion Navy, the Dominion Army, and the Special Forces.

The Navy handles routine activities such as coastal patrols, controlling piracy, escorting merchant convoys and of course more direct military actions, such as the invasion of Ossard. It has a standing muster of over five hundred ships, one third of which are considered warships, and thirty-five thousand personnel. Add to this a merchant fleet of over three thousand, most of which can be converted to a war fitting in weeks, and Wair-Rae has the most powerful navy on Unae. The personnel figure includes a large cadre of land-based logistical staff and two thousand of the much-feared Andrastan Marines, a shock-troop force of legendary skill and bravery.





The Dominion's Army is a fighting force of great skill and determination. It has been organised and drilled to combine several arms - artillery (ballistae, trebuchets and catapults), archers, heavy and light infantry, cavalry, engineers, cabalists and priests - to swiftly achieve its objectives. Supplementary forces are geared to keep forces in the field with utmost efficiency.

The Army is largely occupied with the task of expanding the Dominion's territories and a most of its forces are currently stationed in the Southern Colonies and Lae Ossard. The army is heavily dependent on the navy for transportation and supplies. The army is listed as having a three hundred of its own ships, eight thousand coaches, carts and wagons, and one hundred and sixty thousand personnel. Amidst this personnel figure are the famous troops of the Bareth Archers, whose history goes back to the Third Dominion, the feared Silvan Guard which personally guards the Royal House and Pasinotis in Yamere, and the fanatical troop known as Dylann's Disciples, a pack of trained but very dangerous berserkers who claim their fighting fury is powered by the will of Dylann, god of healing and the insane.

The exact numbers of Special Forces are a state secret but it holds nowhere near the personnel of the other two divisions. All the same they hold some Wair-Rae's greatest military talent. It is a very secretive organisation full of small commando squads of assassins, suicide troops and spies. It also supports many secret programmes that are being worked on to give the elven armed forces an edge in war with new tools of siege and destruction.

There are several small cells of Special Forces operatives who have settled in Heletian cities and are thus effectively behind enemy lines. One of the missions that the Special Forces have reportedly trained for is the forcible extraction of some of the Heletian League's most important military and political figures, including the world-famous artist, engineer and inventive genius, Leonardo of Albuscaut.

For the most part the Dominion's Military has been the smoothest working part of elven civilisation in the past century. Its upper echelons have always come from the nobility and are generally from houses loyal to House Quor Budasa. During Caemarou's early years a reformation of the military enabled many new bloodlines to gain rank. The rank and file of the military are recruited from the commoner masses attracted by good pay, the chance of advanced education, and reasonable living conditions. Careful planning, constant drilling, superior armoury and a series of brilliant victories has kept the morale of the Fifth Dominion's armed forces very high. But now, as the spoils of success weaken the resolve of some, it seems that resentment is filtering through the ranks. Prince Jusbudier, the Blood Prince, is loved by many in the military, knowing that he is a great and accomplished warrior. It had always been thought by many of the officers that the young prince would some day be promoted to Minister of the Military, instead he was sent to govern the Southern Colonies and his older, hen-pecked brother was placed above them. It is whispered among some knots of officers that their superior, Prince Roe Dalmanor, the heir to the Fifth Dominion has never even killed a man in combat. There is little respect, and only a growing disquiet at his careless placement by his otherwise faultless father, the High King.

FOREIGN POLICY

The High King has been careful to appear neutral in all his dealings with foreign nations except Fletland. Caemarou has diplomats stationed in all capitals in Dormetia and they perpetuate this myth of neutrality and indifference by seeming to put most of their efforts into expanding elven trade opportunities. The truth of all these diplomatic postings is that highly talented people have been very carefully placed to monitor local events, and to liaise with the clandestine Special Forces cells who work to destabilise the host nations as the Fifth Dominion continues to emerge. Eventually the Ansilsae will become common knowledge in Dormetia, and when it does the High King must quickly know. Surprise is a special element that must not be wasted.

RELIGION

Only the five faiths of the Kinreda are legal in the lands of the Fifth Dominion. The followers of the Terura Kala and the First Faith are hunted down and imprisoned, beaten and killed. The followers of the non-elven faiths, such as the Church of Baimiopia, the Messengers of the Prabesk and the Flet Faiths are illegal, and this law rigorously enforced. As a general rule punishment entails the destruction of holy and sacred property and icons, and offenders and missionaries are sent straight to the Arena to be pitted unarmed and alone against gangs of drunken, armed elves. For more see - *The Faiths, Cabal and Sisterhood*.

TRADE

Trade is normally a two way thing. The elves of Wair-Rae export their fine wines and works of art, and in return import copious amounts of Heletian gold, envy and state secrets. Most trade handled by Wair-Rae is of an internal nature; Serhaem, for example, exports its wines to Yamere only. Increasingly, however, the whims of fashion and the profiteering of the merchant houses means that Burvois wines and Heletian textiles are becoming popular imports to Wair-Rae. Still there is no balance in such trade agreements.

CURRENCY

The currency of the Fifth Dominion is the same as the four dominions that proceeded it, the Crown, bearing a portrait of the High King. Like the other nations of Dormetia, silver is the standard medium of exchange, but the rarer gold and more plentiful copper coins are also used. Crowns are issued by the Royal Treasury in Yamere and are the equivalent value of the Evoran Dinar, which makes them worth two Heletian Florins, five Flet Guilders or five Burvois Gold Pieces. Wair-Rae's colonies do not have the power to mint their own coinage and once yearly heavily laden vessels leave Yamere under Navy escort taking fresh coins to the satellite states.

Any money lender in Wair-Rae will do a reasonably fare exchange for foreign currency. Many other shop keepers will seek a high commission for taking foreign coin, and market stall operators will double the exchange rate in their own favour.



LANGUAGES

The common language of Wair-Rae is Velsanan, a beautiful and ancient tongue which is often called elven by those from other lands. There is no universal "common tongue" on Unae, although if we elves have our way there soon will be. Wair-Rae nobility is well schooled and fluent in most languages, especially those trained for diplomatic service overseas. Many merchants and traders understand enough Prabeq and Heletian (both Sidian and Maran dialects) to transact their business, but generally they prefer to speak in their native tongue as this gives them the upper hand in such dealings. As for commoner elves they only have enough foreign words to insult outsiders. The crudest of these words are Fletish.

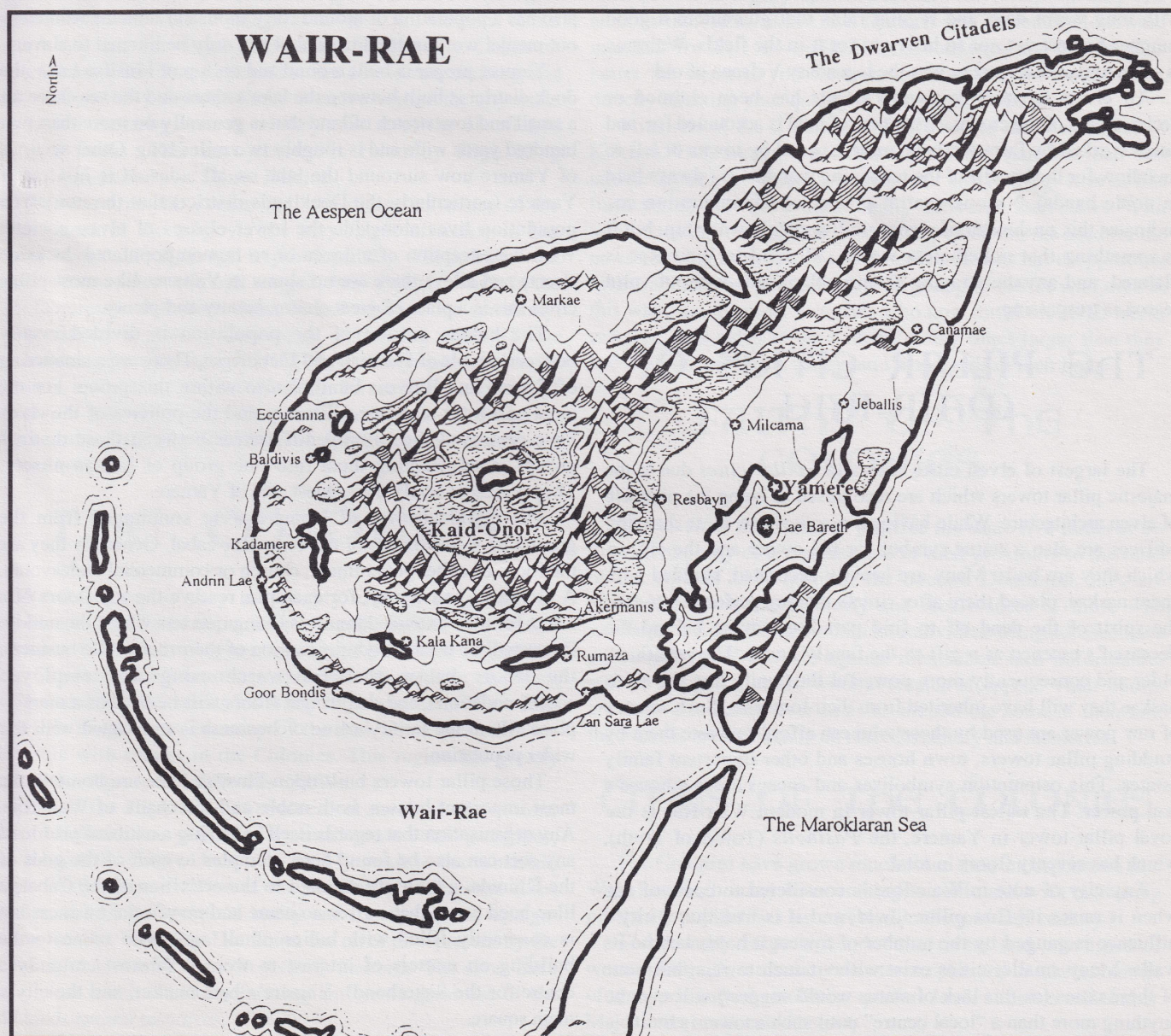
Velsanan several dialects varying from the pure and elegant Velsanan spoken by the nobility through the more functional versions used in the mercantile and military circles down to the less reverent street patios used by most commoner elves.

Criminals speak a degraded version of Velsanan, called Varrast, which they use to conceal their illicit dealings from outsiders. All versions of Velsanan are rich in texture and vocabulary so that all elves are able to express themselves with colour and vigour.

When in Wair-Rae learn Velsanan or else hire a translator.

THE CALENDER

Elven civilisation measures time from the Ansilsae Revelation, this was eight thousand two hundred and three years ago or 0 AR. The elves do not have months in their annual calendar, instead they merely divide the year into seasons. Notable calendar days are solstices and equinoxes. There are also many religious festivals and holy days observed by the Five Faiths that define the rhythm of life in Wair-Rae. Elven travellers, merchants and traders use the more widespread Heletian calendar when operating outside the Fifth Dominion. In that calendar the year is 516EK (Encarnigo Krienta).





THE LAND OF WAIR-RAE

The island of Wairanir is the core of the Fifth Dominion, and a wide land of contrasting natural and constructed beauty. From its insurmountable inner mountains, wide river valleys, deep blue lakes and wild woods, the island has been tamed but not broken. Wairanir is peppered with traces of mild volcanic activity, from slow smouldering mountains that haven't erupted for centuries to plentiful hot springs and the odd boiling mud pool.

The climate of Wairanir can be unforgiving. Winters are cold with all but the southern lakes icing over. Snow carpets the mountains and often spills deeply into the valleys, the woods shed their leaves in a colourful autumn display that can take the observer's breath away. Spring is a splendid time of birth, rebirth, life and green, with an increasing warmth that heats the body and the heart. Summer is often the greatest time of wonder with long warm days and regular rains that guarantees a good summer harvest yet not so heavy to rot it in the fields. Wairanir is close to paradise, just as was the legendary Velsana of old.

All elven territory within Wairanir has been claimed or declared land of the crown. Every acre of land is accounted for, and either worked by farm workers, mined, paved by towns or left to lie fallow for the benefit of the remaining woodlands (always held in noble hands). No one central system of administration co-ordinates this mishmash of responsibilities and ownership, but it is something that nonetheless works. All land in Wair-Rae is claimed, and anyone straying from public roads without valid reason is trespassing.

THE PILLAR CITIES OF WAIR-RAE

The largest of elven cities are called *pillar-cities* due to the majestic pillar towers which are recognised as being the pinnacle of elven architecture. While having a practical use, these dizzying edifices are also a status symbol for the owner and the city in which they are built. Many are heavily decorated, studded with spent naskae, placed there after rituals that are performed to free the spirit of the dead elf to find paradise leaving behind the deceased's escenco as a gift to the family-house. The wealthier, older and consequently more powerful the family line the more naskae they will have inherited from their forebears. Such sources of raw power are used by those who can afford to waste them by studding pillar towers, town houses and other important family estates. This ostentation symbolises and encapsulates a house's real power. The tallest pillar tower in modern Wair-Rae is the royal pillar-tower in Yamere, the *Pasinotis* (Tower of Truth), which has seventy floors in total.

Any city of note in Wair-Rae is considered to come of age when it raises its first pillar tower, and it is true that a city's influence is gauged by the number of towers it holds behind its walls. Many smaller cities exist without such towers, but none of these cities (as this lack of status would suggest) will ever be anything more than a "local centre" until such a tower is built.

THE FINAL CAPITAL YAMERE

Until it is seen with one's own eyes the elven capital cannot be fully understood for the beauty and the command it presents. I have travelled Unae extensively and seen many wondrous sights such as the soaring spires of the Holy City Baimiopia and the magnificent minarets of Belmez, yet nothing man-made I have seen rivals the majesty of Yamere. Here, summoned from the very soil of Unae, are the marble towers that give elven cities their name as pillar-cities and on a scale never before seen. Towering well over three hundred yards high and some as wide as a hundred, these towers are as noble as any of our many achievements. In Yamere these towers rise out of a large shallow freshwater lake that is lined with round stones of a golden yellow colour, the marble reflecting the lake's beauty and vice versa.

Yamere is home to well over one quarter of a million elves, it also has a population of around forty thousand humans who carry out menial work in conditions that can only be likened to slavery.

Yamere proper is built around and on top of Finsilsa Lake, the dock district is built between the lake's shore and the sea shore on a small and low stretch of land that is generally no more than two hundred yards wide and is roughly two miles long. Other sections of Yamere now surround the lake on all sides. It is in Greater Yamere (particularly the Docklands district) that the non elven population lives alongside the lower classes of elven society. With the exception of a dozen or so human populated dockside streets and alleys there are no slums in Yamere, like most pillar cities this is a place of great charm, beauty and plenty.

The human section of the population is divided evenly between people of Heletian and Flet origin. There are a smattering of Evoran and Burvois families also within this group. For the most part inter-marriage, illiteracy and the policies of the elves have destroyed the cultural differences between these distinct groups, amalgamating them into one group of human misery. They represent surely the saddest side of Yamere.

The marble towers of Yamere were summoned from the ground by elementalists of the Wair-Rae cabal. Generally they are the focus of either government, church or commercial endeavours. A merchant house may, for example, reserve the top floors of a tower for their extended family's living quarters whilst the middle floors will be used for administration of their mercantile business, the floors below that for warehousing and employee accommodations, and the ground floors will be used as a marketplace where the family's line of business is transacted with the wider population.

Those pillar towers built upon Finsilsa Lake are home to the most important houses, both noble and merchant, of Wair-Rae. Any organisation that regards itself as having a national profile of any sort can also be found here - temples to each of the gods of the Kinreda, a building devoted to the activities of the Cabal, a lilac-hued tower that carries no name and no official business but is constantly filled with ladies of all ages who come to the building on matters of interest to women (almost certainly a centre for the Sisterhood), Yamere's best market, and the city's main square.





THE HISTORY OF YAMERE

With the catastrophic fall of the Third Dominion the seas rose, a by-product of the terrible magicks used by the warring factions of the Fiquene House in their efforts to destroy each other. Once the new sea level stabilised the surviving elves of the Wairanir provinces found themselves on a large island, an island populated by only the insular dwarves of the Citadels and the backward ogre clans. The elves were quick to establish new cities, the first to be founded was the city of Yamere, a settlement that would within a century be a pillar-city and the global centre of the surviving elven civilisation, a base from which to rid Wairanir of the ogre clans forever.

Yamere was founded two thousand and eighty one years ago, or in the year 6380 AR. Within seasons of the first streets being carved from the bedrock the first scouting parties would be spreading from the settlement to gain information on the nearby ogre clan fortress towns. Within a year the first army would march from the city to exterminate the three closest fortress towns in a campaign that was to last the length of spring.

Yamere stood as a rallying point for the dejected and lonely survivors of the Third Fall. As manias (not as deeply rooted but nonetheless as deadly as the Melhil) caused many deaths, the success, safety and prosperity of Yamere represented the only beacon of hope the elves could see. Before long it was a crowded city which led to the founding of Old Serhaem and Finsilsa. Eventually all three cities would grow into each other, creating the city of Greater Yamere that today is simply called Yamere.

The rise of Yamere was governed by the House Begonis before a series of tragic accidents and the quirks of marriage handed the crown to the House of Quor Budasa. In all of its time Yamere has known only growth, even during the dark years of the famine following New Moon's Night the city still grew.

Yamere is a powerful symbol to the elves of Wair-Rae, in many ways as powerful as their belief in the Ansilsae. To the common elf, Yamere is the Fifth Dominion, to walk its streets is to live the glorious future that awaits our race. Yamere is as real as the gods, the Ansilsae and elven superiority.

THE PEOPLE OF YAMERE

Yamere holds close to three hundred thousand inhabitants, one quarter of a million of them elves and most of them possessing considerable wealth and skill. The non-elves of the city are merely there for the convenience of their masters. Within the elven population is a profusion of variety and extremes; slaves, gladiators from the Arena, cabalists, priests, artists, charlatans, entertainers, artisans, merchants, traders, scholars, seers, agitators, bodyguards, thieves, herbalists, seamen, nobles, kultists, students and royalty. They are all here, and each one of the city's inhabitants has a life and stories to tell. Yamere is a microcosm of all the elven dominions, and its cosmopolitan dockside district is a microcosm of Unae.

POLITICS OF YAMERE

The politics of Yamere are incredibly complex. Every power broker in Yamere has his or her eyes fixed on those below who would usurp them, those above whom they wish to usurp, and warily on their peers who might serve for or against their goals. This fragile atmosphere of distrust and intrigue has recently crystallized so that there are two main factions into which the major noble and merchant houses have split; those aligning themselves with House Fiquene who have long held ambitions for the throne, and those who support the status quo. This latter faction in some few cases actively supports House Quor Budasa or else is neutral and conservative. Currently the Cabal (and it is thought, the Sisterhood) is supportive of High King Caemarou, so no real threat seems able to seriously challenge for the crown at this time, but the politics of the Royal Court are very fluid and fickle. The people of Yamere and Wair-Rae as a whole support their High King, seeing with their own eyes how he has stopped a fall, and begun the rise of the Fifth Dominion. But their common wisdom does not carry through to the tainted blood of the nobility.

High King Caemarou is now more aware than ever of the threats to his regime and is acting behind the scenes to strengthen his rule, his allies and his territories such as Yamere, Akermanis, Lae Yamere, Serhaem, Lae Ossard, Lae Bareth and the Southern Colonies. With war about to explode onto the wider stage of Unae the High King doesn't want any local disturbances at home in Wair-Rae. His enemies had better beware.





Places of Note

Pillar Towers

- 1 The Cabal
- 2 The Sisterhood
- 3 House Begonis
- 4 House Fiquene
- 5 House Jenn
- 6 House Filbae Jala
- 7 House Silvana
- 8 House Komae
- 9 House Cantos
- 10 House Jhan
- 11 House Fae Jora
- 12 Lae Corster's Tower "Adamantis"
- 13 College of Executioners/Serhaem Prison

Major Temples

- 14 Culann
- 15 Dylann
- 16 Pennardum
- 17 Teteri
- 18 Andrasta



THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YAMERE

A city the size of Yamere holds many attractions for visitors and traders. From the hustle of a dozen major markets to the blood-tingling excitement of the Arena, from the picturesque views of Finsilsa Lake to the awesome pillar-towers, from the ostentation of the Mercantile Mile to the majesty of Temple Avenue, from the poverty of the Docklands to the wealth of the pillar towers, and from the wondrous effects of Magic Avenue to the calm beauty of Velsana Vale Yamere is a city of contrasts and rich diversity. It is a city of three hundred thousand souls.

The Arena

The Arena is one of the cultural hearts of Yamere. Here, once a week, up to thirty thousand citizens gather to watch competitions of strength, speed and battle prowess. The battles of the gladiators draw the biggest crowds lifting them into a fervour. Gladiatorial competition can take many forms; one on one competitions and team events, or sometimes a team versus a large wild beast. Often the matches are to the death. The most common battles are between humans (Flets being a favourite inclusion) and elves. A real crowd pleaser is the monthly ogre match when one or two of the giant men are set against three times their number in a competition to the death. Two hundred years ago a small dragon was beaten by a troop of ten elven combatants in a display that was amongst the Arena's most spectacular. Annually tournaments are held between cabalists who unleash vivid displays of magic in matches that are geared more towards drawing a reaction from the crowd than causing injury.

Some gladiators gain fame and great wealth in the Arena (these are the wealthiest human citizens in Yamere), but all eventually meet death on the sands of the Arena floor where their wealth was made. The Arena represents an escape for humans, but one that is symbolic, not real. It's the only place in Yamere where a human can get away with talking and fighting back against his elven masters, but even this is a kind of slavery.

Finsilsa Lake

The lake that dominates the city and is so responsible for its growth, structure and beauty is a large shallow body of freshwater. It is filled from dozens of springs which lie in the bed of the lake, and from a number of small streams that find their source in the surrounding hills and mountains. Never more than three yards deep the lake is lined completely on the bottom with foot long and smaller rounded golden-yellow rocks that give the lake its yellow colour. In some districts of the lake the rocks also hold a number of blue, green or orange among their number, but yellow is always dominant. These stones are considered a good luck charm for Yamere and it is treason for anyone to disturb or pilfer them. Disturbingly, someone has recently taken to etching anti-Caemarou slogans on stones bordering the King's Market.

Many bridges and causeways have been built over the lake forming an intricate network carrying people to the buildings and sites of interest that rise from the lake bed. At the heart of the

lake is the Pool of the Past, an open stretch of water where the lake is at its deepest and where many come to contemplate the coming world of the Fifth Dominion.

The Markets

The city is dotted with many markets, a dozen majors and many smaller local strips of wheel barrows and stalls. Most commercial business in Yamere happens in the commercial districts around the Mercantile Mile, an avenue lined by retailing buildings (including the lower levels of some merchant houses' pillar towers). The street markets are less chaotic than those of Vangre, Porto Baimio and Nerva, but with just as much if not more variety. Seemingly anything can be sold or bought, and these areas also throng with street entertainers of exceptional ability. The markets are the hub of Yamere and the best places for a newcomer to get a handle on what is happening in the city. This is where the rumour mill grinds its grist.

The King's Market

The King's Market is the biggest in Yamere, its produce is the most costly and of the highest quality. It is here, on occasion, that the High King himself will descend from his pillar tower, the Pasinotis, to shop surrounded by his retinue followed by discrete guards and gawking citizens.

This is the best patrolled of Yamere's markets, and also attracts the finest street entertainment. The entire market is a flat square paved in the polished stones of the lake bed. It is set only inches above the waters of the lake, and has many narrow streams meandering through its paving crisscrossed by arched stone bridges. The stones of the market floor shine as if wet, and at sunset and sunrise it glows golden like the lake's waters, making it look as if traders and customers alike are walking on water.

A curiosity at the markets is Threepenny Jack, a beggar who always seems to be at the market before the stalls open and there at the end of the day, and always with the same three coins in his begging cup. The rumour is that Jack is a noble doing penance after committing a crime of passion in Caemarou's court, and that is why his presence is tolerated in the King's Market.

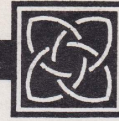
The Avenue of Temples

The Avenue of Temples is one of Yamere's three great roads. It was originally a ferry route that took the faithful to the valley's major temples that were built outside the walls of the three young towns that later grew into Greater Yamere. From the shallows of Lake Finsilsa the temples were summoned, beyond the rule of the three cities so that all of the faithful could catch a ferry to prayer without fear or favour.

The original three town sites were all founded over two thousand years ago; Old Serhaem now forms Yamere's Docklands area; Old Yamere is the north western part of the city, now dominated by The Graves; and Old Finsilsa, which was originally established on the eastern shore of the lake, is now home to Yamere's Cabal.

The Avenue of Temples is an elevated walkway that crosses the lake's surface, with chapels, temples and shrines flanking it.





Not every building here is of a spiritual nature, but the more magnificent the building the more likely that this will be the case. The avenue is often used for parades and ceremonies during the many religious festivals that occur over the elven calendar.

The Avenue of Magic

The Avenue of Magic is a sparkling arcade that circles the northern half of Finsilsa Lake and is home to many wonders, not all of them magical. The chief faculties of the Yamere Cabal, their pillar towers in the Old Finsilsa district, and their university with its associated colleges and schools, are arrayed along the eastern end of this road.

The Cabal share the road with those who practice a different kind of enchantment, the entertainers. The west end through to the northern bend of the Avenue of Magic is home to Yamere's premier night life. It is this district that gives the Avenue its nickname, Lae Quersic, meaning New Quersic (Quersic being the capital of the Second Dominion that fell through decadence and corruption). Here taverns, cafes, restaurants, travel inns, regal hotels, theatres, concert halls, children's matinees and a hundred other leisure activities rub shoulders, many of them illegal.

The Mercantile Mile

The Mercantile Mile covers a series of streets and runs across the middle of Lake Finsilsa. On most of its length it is lined with the pillar towers of the most powerful merchant houses of Wair-Rae, their shop fronts being the most prominent. Between these leading premises are numerous other lesser markets, workshops and trader stands offering every product and service imaginable. The Mercantile Mile is where a traveller should go to buy from a reputable dealer, at a premium price of course.

The Dockside

The Dockside is one of the oldest areas of Yamere. The two mile stretch of wharves, warehouses, ghettos and neighbourhood markets make the area a very lively, varied and different place to the rest of the city. During the day the streets are crowded with workers, shoppers, merchant and seamen. At night it is a lonely place populated by only vermin and gangs. Several cartels of criminals, the infamous yet surprisingly anonymous Crime Houses of Yamere, run extortion and protection rackets in the district, something that has gone on for centuries.

Old Yamere

Old Yamere has been preserved as a historical precinct with a bohemian flavour. Much of the old port, abandoned by the merchant seamanry that once thrived here, is now taken over by a colourful colony of artists, actors, musicians, minstrels and the like who, with the fall of each night, head off to work in Lae Quersic. There are a number of small but thriving nightspots emerging in the Old Yamere district itself. This, the oldest part of Yamere, holds streets that are over two thousand years old. Hidden amongst the entertainers who have moved into the area is a growing number of hard core criminals, many active in the

smuggling and narcotics trade, using links with Old Yamere's sewer system and the ogre clan catacombs underneath Kinreda Square. Evidence of gang warfare has emerged recently with disputes over the ownership of Old Yamere's most exclusive music hall and bawdy house, The Gory Pirate.

Old Finsilsa

The Old Finsilsa district, although not with the same status as Old Yamere, has its own heart and has found its own way in the city of Greater Yamere. Where Old Yamere has become an artists' colony, Old Finsilsa has become a focus for the magic users of Yamere. Here the Cabal has much of its power base, and in the ancient winding streets many have taken up residence, so that the flashing of coloured lights, hooting and squealing of strange sounds, and the concussions of explosions and showers of sparks that occur through each and every night no longer draw even a remark except from incredulous visitors from the magiphobic Heletian League. Two hundred (two-thirds) of Yamere's cabalists are estimated to live in Old Finsilsa.

Old Serhaem

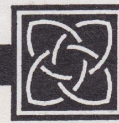
While the other two Old Cities have found a way to hold onto their own identities, Old Serhaem unfortunately has not. Its twisted streets are those of the Docklands, and are home to the majority of the human worker population of the city. Today the district is terribly run down and filthy, rife with disease, crime, over-crowding and death. The only honour to fall upon Old Serhaem was the naming of a colony city in the Kramer Confederation after it two hundred and thirty three years ago; this new city was called Serhaem and is ruled by the third son of High King Caemarou, Prince Celien.

The Docklands is a small district of tight winding streets and alleys that can be found directly behind the oldest part of the dockside. Here, all but one thousand of the forty thousand human labourers within Yamere cluster together within a dozen or so streets. The area, often referred to as Lae Lunae or the Ghetto, is avoided by the elven population, not so much because of fear for personal safety (though that is a real threat) but because of the rundown and filthy nature of the ghetto. This is the only district of the capital that is not sewered. Here violent deaths, disease, malnutrition and poverty are commonplace. The only relief to this misery is supplied by a secret Flet kirsh of Geilan whose priestess, Mate Freida, tends to the sick and comforts the poor.

The district is also home to many contact groups and organisations that deal discretely with the human traders who come into port. Slowly the word of human slavery and damnation by the elves is escaping Yamere, soon all will know.

The Graves

The Graves area holds a group of simple shrines devoted to each of the five sanctioned legal gods that are worshipped in Wair-Rae. Here the death ritual of passage is conducted, freeing the departed elf's spirit from its naskae (soul pearl). The shrines are set amongst beautiful parklands and wild gardens that are separated from the heart of Yamere by a ring of towering golden pines. In





the woodland surrounds of this sanctuary the bodies of the dead are mourned and then buried in unmarked graves, giving them back to their world, Unae.

Pasinotis Tower

Dominating the centre of Yamere, facing across the King's Market towards Festival Square and looking out to sea, is the city's tallest tower, the Pasinotis. This tower of golden stone encrusted with naskae of the royal house, Quor Budasa, has seventy floors. Within, all levels are accessed through a magical lift system attended by minor wind elementalists supplied by the Wair-Rae Cabal. This system has two public shafts that give service through the centre of the tower, and two private lift shafts and numerous staircases that provide secure access to the tower's upper levels. The Pasinotis tower is home to the Royal House, the glittering centre of the royal court and the seat of government.

Velsana Vale

Velsana Vale is a circular park set upon a floating island made of elm timber that has been lined with rich soils and manures creating a garden vale of incredible beauty. Here giant willows drape their graceful branches into the placid waters of the lake. Beds of flowering perennials of rare beauty taken from across Unae give this place an air of tranquillity that even the Graves do not hold. The gardeners who tend this exquisite jewel in the crown of Yamere are said to have plant stocks from legendary Velsana that have been carefully nurtured down the millennia and planted in Velsana Vale to remind the elves of the splendour of their long lost homeland.

The Pool of the Past

The Pool of the Past is at the heart of Velsana Vale. This round pool is actually an open section of Lake Finsilsa surrounded by the protective pontoon-island. It is considered a place for quiet contemplation. The edge of the pool is marked as sacred and the paved paths along the shoreline are etched with passages from the elves' holy book, the Kae Ansilsa. Each rest day a priest from one of the Kinreda faiths conducts a service speaking for the safe deliverance of the Ansilsae prophecy.

In the past three weeks a small but growing group of elven twins have met at the pool's edge at sunrise, an hour before the weekly service begins, claiming that they can see the reflection of the gods of the Kinreda in the pool's surface. Twins in elven society are slightly more common than among human kind and according to elven folklore are touched by the gods. The small following now holds twenty-four sets of twins, they are accompanied by as many common folk who come hoping that they too will see the gods.

Kinreda Square

Kinreda Square, adjacent to the Arena, is most often used for festivals. It is also home to a daily market, that includes livestock and fresh produce. Beneath the square are the catacombs of a former ogre clan fortress town that had long since been

abandoned before even the elves came to Wairanir. It was uncovered during the growth of the city and worked into the city's sewer network. Off the main tunnels are many chambers and natural caves. These are used by children, thieves, escaped human slaves and kultists who follow the Terura Kala. Accessible through the sewers and, rumour has it, directly from the Arena, the tunnels present many opportunities to those who have something to hide in Yamere.

Festival Square

This large square is used as extra space when the King's Market area is full or when a public ceremony is being performed. It is built on the lake shore and is raised one foot higher than King's Market which is just above the lake's water level. It is also used on occasions when several faiths from the Kinreda have festivals on the same day and both need access to Kinreda Square.

DARK SIDE OF YAMERE

Yamere is, in many ways, the one thing that saved the elves from a new Melhil, racial suicide. During those desperate years after the Third Fall it was the success and the symbolism of young Yamere that helped give a tired and grief-ridden race a sense of hope. But the pillar-city has its dark side. This is not just the infighting at the Royal Court. It is not the mistreatment of the human labourers, slaves and gladiators that have had their own will and culture beaten out of them over the past two thousand years, it is something much darker and much more deeply rooted.

Fundamentally elves live to excel, to perfect their lives, to make life as comfortable and therefore successful as possible. The only thing that gets in their way is each other. The elves reproduce in such great numbers that there are always too many rivals for too few resources. Elves have an instinctive desire to compete and, if necessary, kill each other so that their house or merchant cartel or city can succeed. This is so fundamentally against the Ansilsae, yet so deeply rooted in the elven psyche, that as the Fifth Dominion dawns before them the elves are already waging a civil war in their subconsciousness and hearts. This sort of subliminal fracture and self doubt is only fuelling the rise of the chaotic and diabolical elements in Wair-Rae. So the kults gain more members, dark spirits claim more souls through lunacy and possessions, the First Faith spreads, crime and criminal gangs grow stronger. And quietly, unknown to most, the edges of the fabric of elven society are starting fray, and in some places seriously unravel. In the Southern Colonies nearly all of the indigenous elven population follows the First Faith, and in the Kalraith Colonies the First Faith can claim one quarter of the population. Kaid-Onor has turned its back completely on the Ansilsae, while Ungria is yet to decide. Meanwhile in the Fifth Dominion the Terura Kala grows in strength, fomenting murder, crime and chaos.

Are these the days of the dawn of the Final Dominion or the last days before the belated judgment of death is passed down from the gods at Ansilsae in long lost Velsana?



KULTS OF YAMERE

The Terura Kala has grown strongly since the taking of the Colonies, the Southern Colonies and Lae Ossard. It is believed that up to two dozen major kulta are operating in the capital at the moment, representing around two thousand devoted members. While this is only a fraction of the total population, many of these kulta are people in places of power and influence.

Nearly all of the Terura Kala's aspects are represented in Yamere, all of the major kulta of slaughter, murder, pain, escenco, theft, lust, death, undeath, beasts, the moon and lunacy are known to be active.

FUTURE OF YAMERE

On the surface Yamere is a wonderful city, but it has a brittle shell. The city seethes with conflict, passion, jealousy and envy. Most would say the future is bright, I cannot be so sure.

THE PILLAR-CITIES OF WAIR-RAE

Yamere is the capital of Wair-Rae and a wonder to behold, but the Fifth Dominion also holds many more pillar-cities, and dozens of lesser cities and thousands of towns. While Yamere is spectacular, it is but one face of Wair-Rae; compare it to the crowded dockside markets and clamour of Akermanis, the dour filth of Rumaza, or the cliff hugging city that is taller than wide, Andrin Lae. Behold, before you is Wair-Rae.

LAE BARETH

The holiest of the surviving elven cities, it is here, completely covering a small island that Lae Bareth stands. Holding within its ornate frescoed walls are the most sacred of temples dedicated to the gods of the elven pantheon. Rumour says even temples to the First and Sixth faiths are hidden on the small pillar-city island.

Amongst a population of twenty thousand priests, pilgrims, holy men and women the elves have created over the past two thousand years the most amazing of sights.

Reachable only by boat, accommodation can only be taken by invitation from a temple or in the many paved squares that dot the city. This is a place of worship, contemplation, festivals and the divine. Not a place for the mortal world of commerce, conspiracy and coin.

AKERMANIS

Akermanis is the power base of House Begonis. This noble house directly claims the loyalty, property or lives of many of the citizens of this closed city. This might sound ruthless and repressive, but for the most part the citizenry of Akermanis have been served well by their masters.

Akermanis is an old city, having existed originally as an ogre clan fortress town that was eventually overrun by the forces of local elven lords. When first the ogre threat was removed the site was left abandoned, just an empty ruin reputedly haunted by the ghosts of those who died horribly during the fort's last terrible battle. After several centuries the site was occupied by travelling elves who required a winter shelter. Folklore tells of these first Akermanians making peace with the ghostly inhabitants, making a pact with the uneasy dead by promising to rebuild the city and again make it great. Alas, it was not to be. One terrible night the fledgling settlement was killed by followers of the Terura Kala that came down from the mountains and slaughtered them all.

Many years later, as the sea levels rose and land became a rarer commodity, the opportunistic young of House Begonis who had laid claim to various sites in the area scouted for the most strategic sites for a family estate. Akermanis, with its warrens of well built stone tunnels and the lack of any nearby competing settlements made it ideal. The family quickly took the ruin and built a town, restating the original agreement with its ghostly occupants - ogre spirits. Within a century it was a city and within another its first pillar tower would stand proudly.

Today, with over one hundred thousand people within its walls, and another eighty thousand without, Akermanis is one of the most vibrant of Wair-Rae's cities. Indeed, it is the city's vitality and population that makes the Begonis so powerful, it has given them a natural stranglehold on a large minority of elven commerce, talent and people.

It is claimed today that the ghosts of the ogre clan still roam the night streets and near forgotten undercity of Akermanis. It is also suggested that such activity is increasing as the upcoming young of House Begonis pay less and less attention to the rituals and agreements made between the ogre spirits and first elven settlers of the ruined ogre fortress site.

RUMAZA

Rumaza is the home base of many of the Fiquene-aligned noble houses, merchant houses, factions and cells. It is a place of conspiracies and plots, a place of terrible manipulation and dark secrets. All are recommended to steer clear of this foul city.

A wounded necromancer founded the city eleven hundred years ago when, seeking shelter, he called the first of the city's pillar towers from the very ground, creating a bone coloured tower that held him in a restless sleep that lasted for ten years. On recovering from his wounds the necromancer, the second heir of the Fiquene House, surveyed the area surrounding him. The land was good and strategically placed; it seemed unclaimed, and strangely empty. The steep-walled valley would make a great stronghold for his family, and before it lay a large freshwater lake that was linked to the distant sea by a wide deep river.

Magically locking his tower young Jorro Fiquene left the site, masking it with magicks until he could return with his family.

Ten years can be a long time, even to us long-lived elves. While he had been gone, the first heir to House Fiquene, Jorro's older sister Feira, had arranged the deaths of her parents, delivering to her control of the house. Concerned with such a show of disrespect and the callous nature of her actions the other younger

brothers and sister of Feira plotted to have her removed, then invested the missing Jorro as head and ruler of the house. In his absence the younger Fiquenes took power and returned stability to the house that had been weakened by Feira's bloody takeover.

With the incarceration of Feira in a dungeon cell on a coastal island all seemed to be going well until Jorro returned to home. The young Fiquenes were displeased to see his return, but also interested to hear his account of an unclaimed river and lake valley with such potential. The Fiquenes had always had their enemies, but now more so than ever. The opportunity to move their more vulnerable assets and people was gratefully taken. Upon examination of the site the family claimed it to be eternally theirs, eventually the estate became a town and then a city, a power base that the Fiquenes had almost complete control over.

With one hundred and fifty thousand people calling Rumaza home it is one of the strongest pillar-cities in Wair-Rae. It is also the least comely. Jorro was a talented elf, a great cabalist; a necromancer, spiritualist and elemental. Combining his talents he called the city from the bedrock of the valley floor, creating a pillar-city of sickly bone coloured towers. The encircling city wall looks like the great skeletal rib cage of some gargantuan snake that had swallowed the city in ages past. This fit symbolism marks a place of corruption and lies, of double-dealing and perversion, of poison and death. Some say a curse was set on the city by Fiera Fiquene. If any still living city or place of the elves is shunned then it is Rumaza.

MILCAMA

The House Jenn is the dominant force of Milcama, making it a stronghold also for the Royal House Quor Budasa. With eighty-eight thousand people, and the leading universities and colleges of Wair-Rae, the city is regarded as being a nursery and training ground for the dominion's elites; the nobility, merchant houses and talented commoner elves who win scholarships.

Milcama is also regarded as a strong base for cabalism; any school where brilliant and inquiring minds gather has always been considered the prime recruiting ground of the Cabal.

The pillar-city holds seven pillar-towers, three of them owned by noble houses, the other four belonging to the city's four most respected universities. These are the: Daenae University, an institution specialising in commerce, foreign relations and politics; the Kaesana Corster, or School of Masters, which involves itself in the tuition of aspiring cabalists; the Kaesana Kinreda, or School of the Gods, a theological school that teaches mainly matters of faith, the Ansilsae and delves into the various spheres of magic; and the last of the Great Four, the Kaesana Caemarou, or the School of High King Caemarou, in which the philosophy and logic of the High King is taught. This newest of the Great Four is funded by student fees and the Royal House, and any young noble or merchant wanting to get anywhere at the Royal Court needs to complete at least one year of study there.

MARKAE

Markae is the second power base of the Fiquene, cultivated over the past six centuries as a fallback position should ever a civil war be waged; House Fiquene has learned to plan ahead since the disastrous Third Fall when a quarter of Unae was drowned.

This pillar city is unremarkable, it being a regional centre for trade and markets. Holding forty eight thousand people and two pillar towers, the city exists mostly as a contingency plan of the Fiquenes. There is a tension in the city, a feeling in the air.

ANDRIN LAE

This cliff hugging city is one of the engineering wonders of Unae, the natural harbour an amazing sight with few rivals. With only thirty thousand inhabitants, Andrin Lae would not usually be large enough to warrant the cost of pillar-towers being constructed, but due to its unique surroundings and the rarity of good flat building sites within the city's immediate area the only way for builders to go was up. Andrin Lae has six pillar-towers. Three that stand atop the cliff as markers to the city's location, and three that protrude from the cliff, running up its side to its crest; the other cliff hugging buildings and streets of this vertical city weave around and through them. The drop from the cliff top to the calm sea harbour below is two hundred yards. The rugged cliff tops do not allow for much building so the majority of the city is on the cliff face, most of this built into old sea caves and mined out tunnels.

Andrin Lae was originally a very rich goldfield, it was also plentiful in silver. Once all these mineral were taken away the huge network of caverns gave a good and well ventilated base (the sea winds blast through the tunnel networks, the air is never still) for settlement, and the natural harbour at the base of cliff made it an irresistible proposition. The rugged beauty of the place has attracted many artists, the city is also home to elementals whose powers preserve the city against the wind and sea.

The easiest route into the city is by sea. Most of the city's food comes from the local fishing fleet, and some income comes from a small number of mines that are still being worked on the outskirts of the city. The city is also renowned for its ship-building, bringing in the timbers from inland forests then lowering them down the cliff-face using huge crane rigs.

A few hours travel down the coast, in the same cliff wall is a new series of mines that show all the promise that Andrin Lae did many centuries ago. It would seem that in years to come a whole series of cliff clinging pillar-cities could dot the Wair-Rae coast.

ECCUCANNA

Eccucanna is an eighteen hundred year old city that is closely tied to the rising fortunes of the old merchant house that has been elevated to the nobility, House Silvana. House Silvana has gained a huge territory here as the districts surrounding Eccucanna were granted or sold to them in payment for favours and support. Fortunately for the Silvana, fate delivered them fields of opals and other precious gems which are the main focus of their business.

Eccucanna has a population of sixty-five thousand and four pillar towers (two of which are owned by House Silvana). This pillar-city is the heart of the Wairanir gem industry, and probably the biggest hub of the gem cutting, mining and selling in Dormetia. Only the Jade Mountains of far off Hindia are reputed to hold higher quality and quantities of such riches. Other significant local industries are farming and lumber.

Recently it was rumoured that some of the opal mines had been so deeply dug that one of them actually linked up with a dead volcanic vent that leads into the hidden valleys of Kaid-Onor. This rumour has been denied by local authorities, but many visit Eccucanna looking for such a route.

OTHER CITIES OF WAIR-RAE

Listed below is some brief information on Wair-Rae's other cities. Most of these are ruled by noble houses and are centres to Wair-Rae's large rural population. None are pillar-cities.

City	Pop.	Ruler	Produce
Jeballis	21,000	Kaela Begonis	Food, textiles, wines
Canamae	19,000	Corma Fiquene	Metal work, iron
Goor Bondis	18,500	Jael Jenn	Mining, food, fish
Zan Sara Lae	15,000	Darsa Silvana	Timber, fish, wine
Kala Kana	15,000	Pae Begonis	Weaponry, food
Kadamere	14,500	Li Quor Budasa	Textiles, food, timber
Baldivis	12,000	Kana Begonis	Fruit, honey, mead
Resbayn	10,500	Ons Fiquene	Narcotics, weaponry

THE COLONIES OF WAIR-RAE

Beyond the borders of Wair-Rae are its colonies. It is here, in places like Serhaem which was established two hundred and thirty three years ago, that the Fifth Dominion's first battle lines are being drawn.

SERHAEM

Serhaem is a part of both the Kramer Confederation and Wair-Rae. Twenty thousand elves live in the port city and on the coastal farmland surrounding it. Heletians have been banned from living in this elven city-state and its expanding territories. This ban is under pain of death. While never announced as law, all neighbouring Heletians know this to be truth. Non-elfen sailors delivering goods to Serhaem are not permitted to leave the Heletian Quarter which adjoins the docks. The only exception to this rule applies to diplomats, merchants and anyone else that Prince Celien of Serhaem decides is important. But, even these visiting dignitaries are kept under constant watch.

Even so, Serhaem's elves are considered more tolerant of outsiders than their brothers and sisters in Wair-Rae. Even we elves need partners to trade with, and the best way into the Heletian League is through the Kramer Confederation. Several Wair-Rae merchant houses are pressuring Prince Celien to allow them greater interaction with human merchants.

Serhaem has very little produce of its own for export. Mostly it imports a variety of elven goods from Wair-Rae and then sells them to the Kramer cities through Heletian merchants.

Serhaem is an important part of High King Caemarou's plans for Dormetia. Elven colonists supported by mercenaries (actually "retired" officers and men of the Dominion's armed forces) have been moving out slowly from Serhaem since its establishment, building their own farming villages, often on the still warm ashes of Heletian villages. This program of expansion has been greatly sped up over the past seven years, sending enough Heletian survivors to Zarustra for word to have filtered through to the back rooms of the Kramer Confederation Council. The reclusive ruler of the city-state Zarustra, Kavaliro Carpaccio, should look beyond the walls of his heavily-fortified keep with deep concern as the elves are encroaching on his southern flank and the Greater Baimiopians march down on him from the north.

Serhaem is governed by a token council of five who are monitored by Prince Celien, third son of High King Caemarou. Celien rarely vetoes a decision made by the council, as he is content sitting in his palace eating, wenching and tapestry weaving. Suffice to say, he is not the High King's favourite son. He is, however, an ambitious ruler who in light of Serhaem's growing power, plans to announce its independence from Wair-Rae. His father is aware of his plans and has planted informants to watch his son's activities.

Serhaem has a large population of mages, at least fifty of various abilities. They operate under the jurisdiction of the Wair-Rae Cabal, having little contact with the Heletian branch of the same group. The most famous of these is Prince Celien's closest adviser, Nicosthene, an illusionist of such ability that it is said his/her true likeness has never been seen. Observers with luridly mischievous minds say that Nicosthene might not even be elven and his/her intimacy with Prince Celien a cause for great concern to the Fifth Dominion.

LAE OSSARD

Lae Ossard has been in existence for less than two years, it being built on the ashes of the Heletian League state, Ossard.

The original Heletian League city-state of a million people fell into corruption under the seduction of the Horned God. The citizenry turned their backs on the wisdom of the Church of Baimiopia and sought the debauchery of the kults. Amidst this chaos the governor was lynched along with all church men of Baimiopia. Opportunist cabalists moved en masse to the city, in particular renegades and Sango Drajo; the Blood Drinkers. Within a few short months the city was a seething crowd of insanity. At this time High King Caemarou issued an ultimatum to King Giovanni the Second of Greater Baimiopia, the largest member of the Heletian League and unofficial head of that organisation. The ultimatum read that if Ossard wasn't retaken by the moral and just



forces of the Heletian League by a designated time the forces of Wair-Rae would quell the city. King Giovanni with the support of his Holy Benefice, Verrocchio, the head of the Church of Baimiopia, sent a full third of the Inquisition and one hundred Des Sankta Glavos (holy knights) to Ossard. All to no avail, with great witchery the inhabitants of the city destroyed the attacking force and delivered their mangled corpses to the Greater Baimiopian capital hundreds of miles away, garishly decorating that city's skyline by impaling the dead knights and inquisitors on any spire to be found amongst the city roofs.

After the failure of the Heletian attempt to retake the city, the forces of High King Caemarou were mobilised. A massive fleet sailed and took the city in a week of fighting that involved so much magic, divine prayer and whimsy that the very reality of the city became twisted and warped, nearly forever torn. After much perseverance and with the aid of the Spirit Queen who rules over the gargoyle Troiths of modern day Kalraith the elves were victorious. All surviving Heletians were put to the sword.

Almost immediately the rebuilding of the razed city began. Elementalists were used to call great towers from the ruins of old Ossard, and thus creating Lae Ossard as a pillar-city. Colonists arrived from Wair-Rae to populate the new elven territory and many of these have already started to move beyond the city walls and into the nearby valleys as they take over the abandoned Heletian farms. This new colony is ruled by High King Caemarou's second son, Prince Dalsior.

After the dramatic events and the divine influence of the Spirit Queen of the gargoyls the very fabric of reality in Lae Ossard is unstable although improving daily. The influence of magic is more potent (though warped) here than elsewhere in the Fifth Dominion. A million dead, buried without due ceremony, has produced a ghastly harvest of sorrowing souls. These phenomena, plus tales of surviving Sango Drajo preying on the colonists, has made it more difficult for Prince Dalsior to rebuild this region than High King Caemarou had hoped. All the same, Lae Ossard is emerging as a potent stepping stone in Caemarou's plans of conquest.

THE COLONIES

The Colonies, as they are simply known, have been in existence in one form or another since the fall of the Second Dominion five thousand years ago. In the past forty years High King Caemarou has taken this ramshackle association of towns, villages and hamlets under his wing as provinces of Wair-Rae. The High King rewarded many of the new elites created in his early rule with estates in the Colonies. This region has greatly expanded and prospered since this takeover.

Prior to the High King's involvement much of the western coast of Kalraith was populated by small orcan bands and tribes, plus a handful of ogre clans who largely stuck to the mountain ranges. With the unification of the previously widespread elven population into one political entity and its subsequent amalgamation into the Wair-Rae Dominion the elves now present by the far the most powerful force in western Kalraith. The elves have since taken much land into farming and made great use of the wild lands natural resources.

THE MESSENGERS OF KALRAITH

While often suffering the ridicule of the Wair-Rae elves, the "provincial" Kalraith elves are nonetheless the same people, just separated by a sea and two thousand years, a period that is less than nine elven lifetimes.

If you ask any elf of either the Colonies or Wair-Rae what is the major difference between the two groups the unanimous answer will be heard proudly from those of the Colonies and with concession of those from Wair-Rae; the Colonies' minstrels. Because the Colonies did not immediately rebuild the cities lost in the Third Dominion's fall, instead spending most of their time consolidating their territories against the native orc tribes, the most common form of communication between the walled towns and villages were travelling minstrels. These talented elves were great storytellers who became invaluable news carriers. Often such news was highly confidential and for receipt of only one anxious individual at the next town. It was customary to reward minstrels for their news with board, food, wine and favours. The better the minstrel you were the more news you would carry, directly affecting your quality of life. It paid to be good.

Minstrels of the Colonies call themselves the Messengers of Kalraith. They are renowned dancers and musicians but their best talents lay in their poetry, singing and storytelling. It is in this form which they have traditionally delivered their news. With safer roads due to a much higher elven population the need for the news-carrying minstrels to travel between towns has dropped, but their traditions are kept alive by the young minstrels who train in this way, and the older minstrels who now travel the elven world carrying their skills to an audience many times larger than they had ever reached in the valleys and woodlands of their home.

FAITHS OF THE COLONIES

The elves of the Colonies practice the same five faiths as do the vast majority of elves. Because of their proximity to the ruins of the core of old Kalraith, the Second Dominion, they are passionate about the stupidity and recklessness of those who worship the Sixth Faith. Should an individual being accused have conclusive proof brought against them, then such unfortunates will be flogged to death without chance of appeal. Their bodies are thrown to sea or river so as to not soil the home of their kin, their names are stricken from records, history and memories.

CITIES OF THE COLONIES

The Colonies have grown much since their incorporation into Wair-Rae, with many elves coming to settle and with increasing prosperity populations have trebled in the past half century.

Today many large cities dot the rivers and coastlines of western Kalraith, with many new towns planned to take advantage of untapped natural resources - pasture land, minerals and timber. Major cities are detailed below;



THE COLONIES



The City of Kaelar

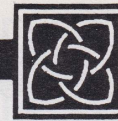
Kaelar is the largest city in the Colonies with a permanent population of fifty-five thousand, and since the amalgamation of the territories into Wair-Rae it has reached pillar-city status with three towers now standing as sentinels over the huge pristine freshwater lake known as Colsarsis. The lake lies at the bottom of a wide inland valley and has many unique features alongside the breathtaking scenery.

The lake is lined with many elven towns and hundreds of villages which are built amidst the *tellawood* forests. These silver-barked trees can live to be over a thousand years old and constantly hold their golden leaves year round only to orange them before dropping them for a three week period in midwinter

where the trees flower a remarkable lightning blue. Such beauty stirs the hearts of elves and the fantastically grained wood is now in high demand throughout Wair-Rae. The lake is a temporary home to tens of thousands of visitors when the festival celebrating the tellawood trees flowering takes place. Such a spectacle is not restricted to the daytime either, the large bell-like flowers hold a pure white centre that opens at nightfall. On nights of a full moon the whole forest can seem to be lit by millions of small lanterns which face up towards the moon.

Kaelar shares the shores of beautiful Colsarsis with three other cities; Balladae, Canafor and Fasbesin. All tower above the lake's lush green shores and each holds one pillar tower, home to the city's administration and its ruling nobles.

The lake and its four cities have slowly become somewhat of



an enigma as the fame of their beauty has spread. The elves in general feel very strongly about the five legitimate faiths, frowning on even the suggestion of others. But, as within the Heletian League, the elves have faiths that predate their more organised beliefs. What is widely known as the Sixth Faith or the Terura Kara is considered to be an elven aspect of the Horned God, but the elves also revere an aspect of what the Heletians call Tergaia, a goddess of nature; we call him Un-Kala. This First Faith is very small and very, very old, predating the First Dominion and going back to elven tribal times. To follow such a god is considered heresy amongst the elves, no better than following the Sixth Faith, but nonetheless some do, and with the emergence of Colsarsis into mainstream elven society, and the fame of its beauty spreading, for every hundred who see her beautiful shores there is one that stands speechless, forever moved, unwilling to go home. Such a person will not be content with the more organised and rigid five faiths of the Kinreda, they have heard a much deeper and older call to a more natural world and father. Forever affected it can only be guessed at what ramifications such revelations have made. Today, a dozen of the many villages that dot Colsarsis's shores are inhabited by craftspeople and minstrels that dedicate themselves to celebrating the lake's beauty. Such people, wittingly or not, have created a temple to Un-Kala, the First Faith; they are nature's disciples.

The City of Balladae

The city of Balladae is home to twelve thousand and is primarily a fishing town that also regulates a lot of the river traffic between Colsarsis and the sea. Being on the shore of the lake has also made it an important and necessary stopover or residence for the increasing numbers of elves who come to absorb the Colsarsis beauty, particularly over winter.

The city is ruled over by the Pontay House, which condones the keeping of slaves, the only House to do so on Kalraith. The Pontay's are well connected in Yamere and related to the High King and Queen. The head of the house, Gluddan Pontay, is the High Queen's brother-in-law.

The City of Canafor

Canafor is known for its work with the much cherished wood of the tellawood trees that line the shores of Colsarsis. Most of its fifteen thousand people work in the lumber industry through logging, transporting the lumber, dressing the timber, creating tellawood products, or selling these products. This is a city of golden sawdust, silver bark and piles upon piles of orange leaves.

Every year at the height of summer in the main market square the elves of Canafor are led by their noble rulers of the House of Ghanberday in the ceremony of the Andoe Festival, in which all of the buildings lining the market square and a make-shift four-level timber tower in the middle have their roofs covered in sacks of the bright orange leaves. As the city is blessed by the priests of the Five Faiths calling upon the forest to keep the city safe and clean, hundreds of citizens on the rooftops empty the sacks of leaves into the breeze and down onto the gathered crowds, in what becomes a maelstrom of amber, yellow and orange leaves.

In many ways these cities of the Colsarsis, and their

inhabitants, represent paradise. Wair-Rae can call them "the Colonies" but it seems a much better place to one such as me. I for one never miss the Andoe Festival.

The City of Fasesbin

Fasbesin is a city of eleven thousand many of whom are involved in wine making and arcane studies. Fasbesin is regarded as the centre of magical research and the Cabal in the Colonies, holding three small schools of magic which each specialise in separate spheres of the arcane. Pan Korwis runs a school specialising in Elementalism which takes ten students; Vay Borganis owns a school devoted to all forms of combat and offensive magic, she has twenty apprentices under her care (the school is also sponsored by the Wair-Rae military commander for the Colonies); and Desray Barador holds a school which mixes the magic of nature and illusion. This school holds two dozen students with many more on waiting lists, as the interest in the First Faith or Un-Kala grows so does interest in all aspects of nature, including what Heletians would consider druidical magic.

The ruler of Fasbesin is the noble house of Zanmoris. The widowed matriarch of the family holds tight rein on the city, organising it and controlling it efficiently and to her wishes. Quo Zanmoris is approaching her third century and is thought to be a member of the Sisterhood as well as an accomplished cabalist.

Lae Yamere

Lae Yamere is governed by the Jenn House, and is largely responsible for processing the many migrants who come to the Kalraith Colonies from Wair-Rae. Some of these newcomers choose to stay in the port city, continually swelling the population which is currently just below fifty thousand.

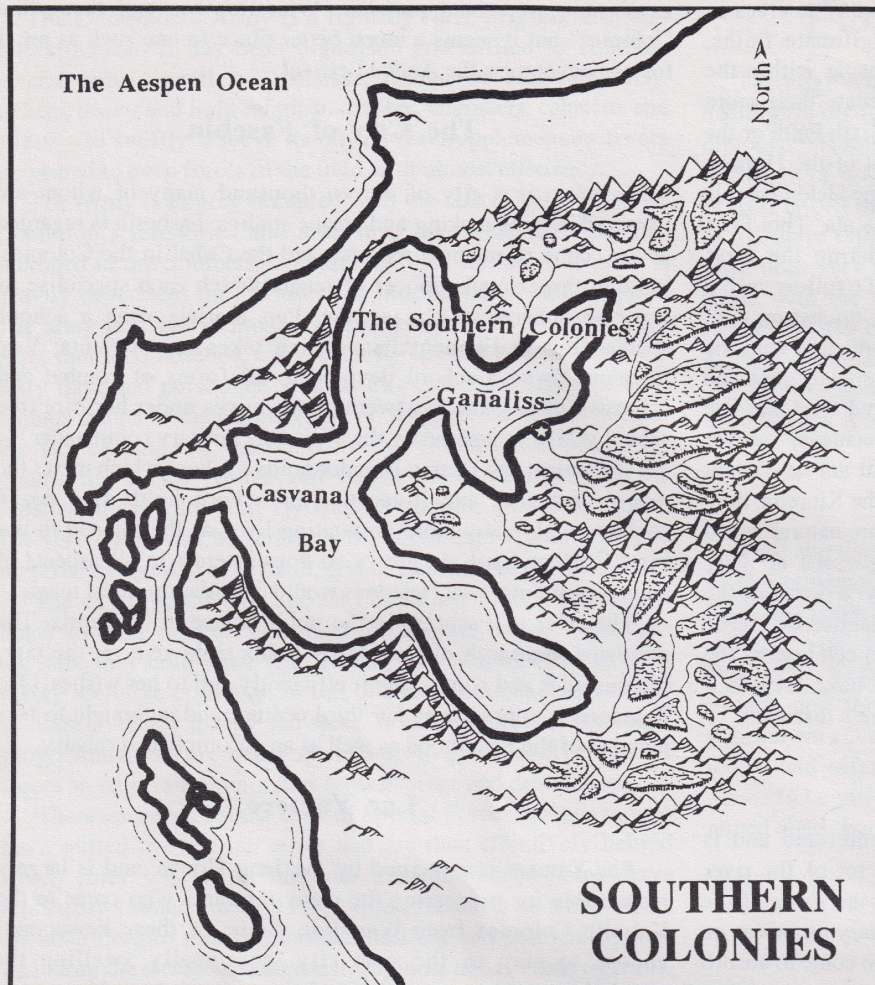
Rumour tells of the Reavers being based in Lae Yamere, a pirate fleet that has harassed Flet settlements to the east for the past seven years, raiding and burning villages and several small towns. Over time the constant attacks have caused the Flets to abandon the south-western portion of Fletland, freeing it up for the advancing elven settlements. No one claims to know the truth of who is behind the Reavers.

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

It is said that, with the Heletian conquest of Saldae, and the similar invasion by the Wair-Rae elves of the area known as the Southern Colonies, the two oppressed groups, Saldaens and Southern Elves, have banded together and created a new haven deep in the desert. This effort has been undertaken in the utmost secrecy and was founded less than half a century ago. Such a place is most likely actually New Saldae, but, considering the lack of elves in New Saldae, the possibility that this rumoured land is another, different green haven should not be discounted.

The territories known as the Southern Colonies is a new area of settlement that is being taken by High King Caemarou's direct wishes in accordance with his plans to fulfil the Ansilsae.





The area was sparsely populated prior to settlement, being previously home to human desert nomads, a handful of orcs tribes and also a scattering of elvish coastal fishing villages.

The area had long been seen as worthless and too harsh to warrant the effort to colonise and maintain. It seems too difficult for the elves of temperate Wair-Rae to comprehend how any large settlements could be self-sufficient or gather an excess of any goods to trade in such a sun-parched and wind-blasted land. Such doubts were quashed by the discovery of a large natural inlet and an associated shoulder of mountains which generates reasonable and regular rainfall. These wide gentle valleys and the associated foothills are completely different to the lush green forests of Wair-Rae, yet, through a combination of regular rain, high humidity and thousands of springs pouring gently into meandering streams, they have created an area of jungle that is sizable enough to support our colonies. Much of the area in question is unpopulated with the exception of a handful of orc tribes that have already been driven out of the best areas as colonists arrive to replace them.

Originally declared territory of Wair-Rae some two years ago (just prior to the storming of Ossard by the forces of High King Caemarou) an intensive program of landing settlers and supplies has seen big inroads made into the elvinisation of the area. Once the successful Ossard campaign was completed half of the assembled force was then directed to the Southern Colonies, as

they have become known, to help with the clearing of the indigenous orcan tribes. Such an effort was not welcomed by the local elves who had lived largely in peace, and even traded with the orc population for centuries.

To the surprise of many in Wair-Rae these indigenous elves have also resisted many attempts by their rulers in Wair-Rae to integrate them into mainstream elven culture, to the extent that some civil unrest has been evident in the past year. As a solution to this problem High King Caemarou has enacted a policy of harsh repression against these southern elves while at the same time vastly accelerating the settlement plans for new colonists. Already the coastal elves are a minority in their own homeland, the plans of the High King would seem to have only one likely conclusion for their culture, and that is its extinction.

PEOPLE OF THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

The indigenous elves of the Southern Colonies are descended from elves who fled the western coastal pillar-cities of the old Wairanir province before they were submerged during the Third Fall. After trying to outrun the rising waters for a decade the southern elves settled in

the bays where they are now found. Their new home presented many challenges, with rain being somewhat irregular, fertile soils a rare find and most rivers flowing only on a seasonal basis. It took decades before they had established themselves and started to prosper. With prosperity comes growth, so as the coastal elves moved to expand their lands with new villages they discovered the much better lands inland of their settlements in the foothills where spring-fed streams and more regular rains have created a jungle paradise.

In the jungles the elves met with the orcan tribes that also call the area home. While an occasional feud, battle or misunderstanding has meant the spilling of blood between the races, relations on the whole have been dominated by peace, understanding and trade.

With the coming of the forces of Wair-Rae this gentle peace was broken. Within months of contact being made with the southern elves, and the realisation by the High King's explorers that lush fertile lands did exist in the interior, a near state of war existed. The southern elves were forcibly drawn out of the jungles and the High King's forces sent in.

Within a year of commencement of the campaign the first and largest jungle valley was cleared of orcan tribes, the area is now being intensively settled with newly arrived colonists from Wair-Rae, the front line of the offensive against the orcs being pushed forever north and east into the neighbouring pockets of jungle.



In many ways these southern elves remind me of the downcast small people of Saldae, the Halflings. In a situation that has some parallels we see the locals being evicted, ignored, abused and made a small voiceless minority. The depression and despair on the shore of Casvana Bay says it all. The southern elves have lost their homes, their culture, their land. I would also suggest that they have potentially lost their faith. I suspect that these elves do not follow the Five Faiths but are heretics, instead purporting belief in the First Faith, otherwise known as Un-Kala.

There is no sense mourning their loss, for the feeble attempts their men make to resist our High King's rule are as futile as the efforts waged by the orcan tribes in the last few jungle valleys.

CITIES OF THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

The Southern Colonies can claim only one pillar-city which is the administrative centre for the region. The city of Ganaliss is home to fifteen thousand, with all but a few hundred being from Wair-Rae. From here march the garrisons that wage war with the few remaining orcan tribes in an attempt to win control of the entire western coast of Dormetia.

Here also is the House Quor Budasa, the High King putting his fourth son in charge; Prince Jusbudier, nicknamed by his friends as the Blood Prince, known to his enemies simply as Terura. Such names have been given to him due to his lust for battle. The young Prince always neglected his studies in academia or the arts, preferring instead to practice sword play, archery or sparring. The Prince is quite entirely a berserker, capable of building himself up into a violent frenzy which, it is said, scares the High King so, that he thought the safest place for his son would be outside of civilised Wair-Rae and in the colonies.

Ganaliss was a fishing village before the arrival of the rule of High King Caemarou, now the city is a regional centre for trade and the settling point for many new arrivals. The one pillar-tower that can be found at the centre of Ganaliss is home to Prince Jusbudier, his family, mercantile interests, bureaucracy and a permanent garrison of troops that keep law and order in the city.

Many new towns and villages are being built in the outlying lands around Ganaliss by the thousands of new settlers.

KAID-ONOR

Kaid-Onor holds the one elvish population within Wairinir that High King Caemarou has no sway over. When Dehl Vanis and Bans Sildaris led a large group of disaffected survivors of the Third Fall into the secluded valleys of Kaid-Onor they promised their followers that never again would they be subject to the tragic pain of the Ansilsae. To enforce this promise the folk of Kaid-Onor adopted a very simple lifestyle; here no cities exist, no armies, no politics or recognised organisation governs them. The elves of Kaid-Onor have stripped themselves of the most common paths and tools of war, thereby incapacitating themselves should they ever feel the hunger to wage it. Guarded by a steep ring of impassable mountains they live in the safest

and most glorious lands in Unae, blissfully unaware and uncaring of their brethren's ongoing folly.

Kaid-Onor is actually the floor of a long dead crater of surely Unae's largest volcano. At three hundred miles across the roughly circular area of deep valleys, lakes, occasional hot springs and fertile volcanic soil has taken tens of thousands of years to become a paradise. To reach Kaid-Onor one must travel through one of three old volcanic vents which lead from the outside of the mountain ring to the inner valley. The Ogre Clans never discovered these passages, so the elves were the first civilised people ever to enter these hidden valleys packed full of unique flora and fauna. Truly, Kaid-Onor is one of the wonders of Unae with many magical tales to tell.

One of the legends of Kaid-Onor claims that the founders, Dehl Vanis and Bans Sildaris, nearing death used nature magic to transfer their naskae and their spirits into the core of twin oak trees growing on a small island on Lake Filvala (the purple-blue deepwater at the centre of the Kaid-Onor crater). Thus the spirits of Dehl Vanis and Bans Sildaris are said to watch over their people. Lake Filvala itself is a mystical place with warm morning mists that are said to give the power of second sight and whose waters are said to heal the afflicted. Whatever the truth of these legends, whenever someone has tried to locate the island and commune with the founders, they have become lost in the mists and not returned.

RUMOURS

The Fifth Dominion, if this is truly it, is still rising, so I suppose to expect it to be perfect at this stage would be nonsense. It is not yet perfect, not even close. Serhaem is secretly plotting to become independent, Kaid-Onor no longer even acknowledges the Ansilsae, the southern elves have turned their backs on the Kinreda, and the nobility of Wair-Rae is more divided now than ever before.

On top of these habitual problems there is the independence and instability of the Cabal, and the hidden Sisterhood who are mysterious in their goals yet apparently trust the Fifth Dominion no more than they do Terura Kala. While we have slaughtered the Flets in such numbers, hundreds of thousands still thrive on our borders, and to be honest they are such quality warriors that they are very much something to be feared. The Terura Kala grows in strength, numbers and daring. The First Faith threatens to take away the entire Kalraith Colony and, on top of all this, our High King, our glorious leader who we are so willing to follow into our promised future, is stark raving mad. His children have begun to show jealousy and the signs of infighting, some show the same symptoms of madness that have taken their father. Their mother is distant, lost to the world, her eyes watching a fantasy happening in another world. She will die soon, age taking her from us. Will that be the blow that will stop our mad High King. Who knows.

Kaleel, heed my my warning. Heed it well. If you disregard this work than you are welcoming war, a war all will lose.



Tomorrow

Tomorrow we will take all of the world in our Final Dominion.

Tomorrow our troops will spill from the gates of our Pillar-Cities, taking all the lands of the world that are rightfully ours by choice, voice and by force.

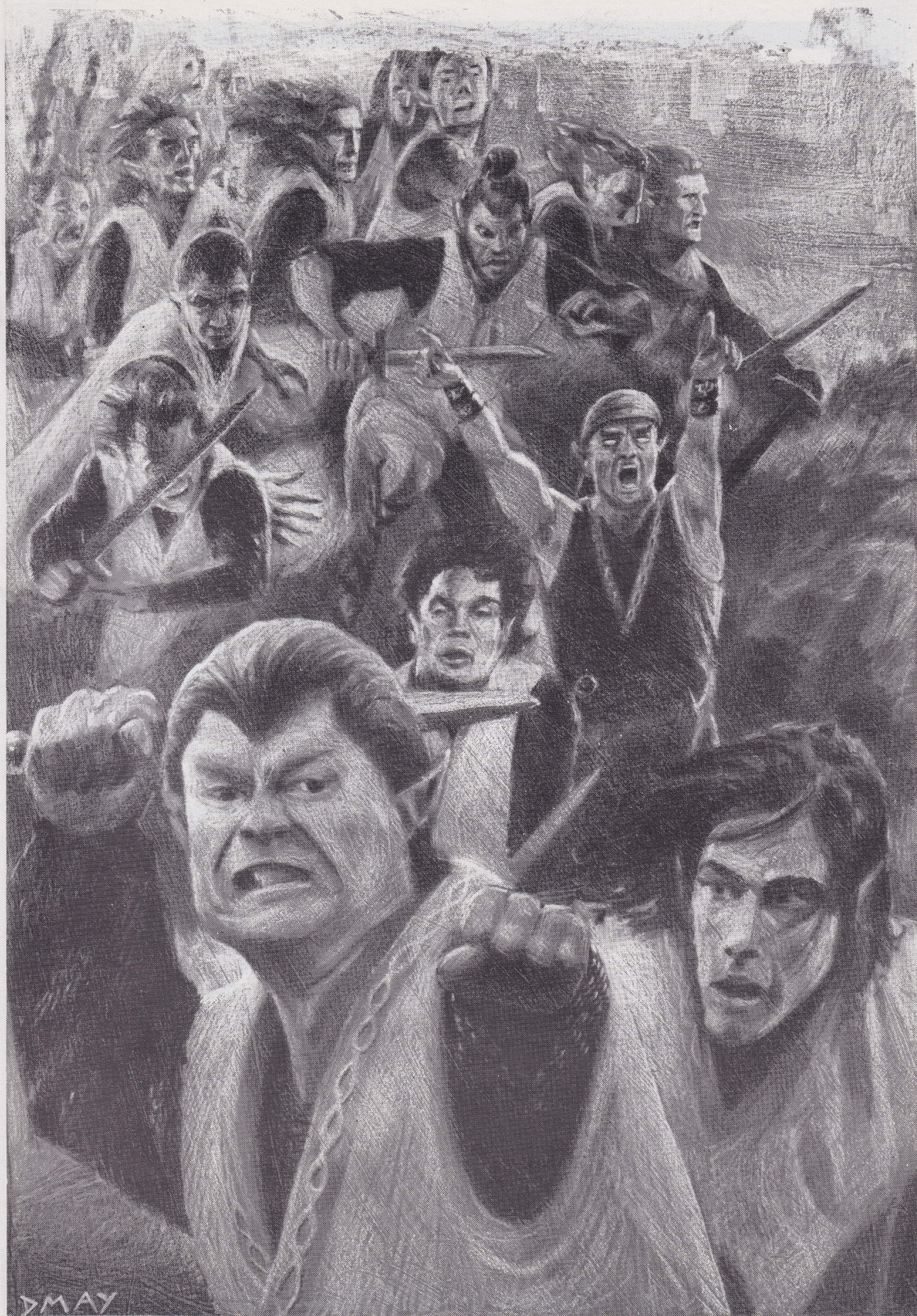
Tomorrow the innocent will cry, the old and weak weep and finally die.

Tomorrow from our bastions we will sweep across the globe in a wave of unstoppable justice to take back our birthright.

Tomorrow, in our army's wake we will leave survivors for only famine and pestilence to take.

Tomorrow in the claiming of the world will be the final naming of the world, and that is the name of Unae, meaning Our World, our Final Dominion.

- Caemarou Quor Budasa, High King of Wair-Rae





Some people say that tomorrow will never come. Others pass it off as simply the future, let it be. The elves know that tomorrow is not something to make jokes about, or to look forward to. To the elves tomorrow is not a time but a place.

THE COMING FINAL DOMINION

While High King Caemarou believes that Wair-Rae is entering the Fifth and Final Dominion not all the scholars of Yamere agree with him. Although it is acknowledged that Old Wair-Rae was the Fourth Dominion the argument lies in whether the decline suffered by the kingdom, that was so cleverly arrested by High King Caemarou, truly counts as the Fourth Fall or is just part of an ongoing decline that has only been temporarily stalled. Some say Wair-Rae has not yet ebbed to its lowest point. These scholars, few though they are, ask difficult questions like: "Where is the devastation of a great fall?" and "What have we learned?"

By royal decree Wair-Rae today is officially the Fifth Dominion but to some it appears to be just the same stumbling Fourth Dominion of four hundred years ago.

FAITH IN THE KING

Supporting the High King and his argument that the Final Dominion is here are the Five Faiths who have thrown their full weight behind Caemarou. In Wair-Rae almost every elf accepts and follows the idea that the Ansilsae is on the verge of being fulfilled; to deny or dispute this is considered blasphemy and a capital offence. The King's Executioners have already "persuaded" many of the error of their ways.

In fact it is now irrelevant whether the High King was right or wrong in declaring his regime the Fifth Dominion as the belief and support that has flooded to him will be enough to make it truth. In Dormetia alone four million elves fervently believe, with a passion only they can display, that High King Caemarou is right. Most of these devoted subjects would gladly give their lives for the future of the Fifth Dominion according to the Ansilsae, and many will.

The self-destruction of the elves during the fall of the Third Dominion was so utterly complete, and the massive rise in sea level over all Unae so disastrous, that no other significant elven populations exist outside of those areas mentioned in the "Today" section of this tract. When High King Caemarou claimed the Fifth Dominion he truly had the support of the vast majority of elves on Unae. The only large population he does not yet claim is that of Ungria, one that will soon be his.

The elves of far off Ungria are thus far uncommitted to what they are cannot be sure about. Officially the representatives of the Kinreda in Ungria, fearing that they might be left behind on the pathway that lies ahead, are slowly moving towards supporting the High King but have not openly declared so as yet. When the day arrives when Caemarou's forces force the integration of

Ungria into the Fifth Dominion of Wair-Rae then perhaps their full support will be given. This day can only be a year or so off as the strength of Wair-Rae's military is the only thing that can save the scattered and fatigued surviving elven populations in the Ungrian valleys from the growing orc incursions.

Outside of Wair-Rae there are a few pockets of elven culture which are not at all convinced of the High King's claim to divine truth. The indigenous elves of the Southern Colonies and Kaid-Onor have completely turned their backs on the entire Ansilsae Cycle and do nothing to advance the High King's cause. Their independence goes further than silent opposition. It is said that there are several organisations based in these areas that are actively working against the High King and his mad schemes.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD UNAÆ

We elves are special creatures. We alone are born with a Soul Pearl, something which due to its physical existence cannot be denied. Whether the other races of Unae are born with a soul, ethereal or not, is a matter for theologians. For the purposes of this work which I have written in order to help the other races of Unae understand my people more thoroughly, we elves are undeniably different, many say *superior*.

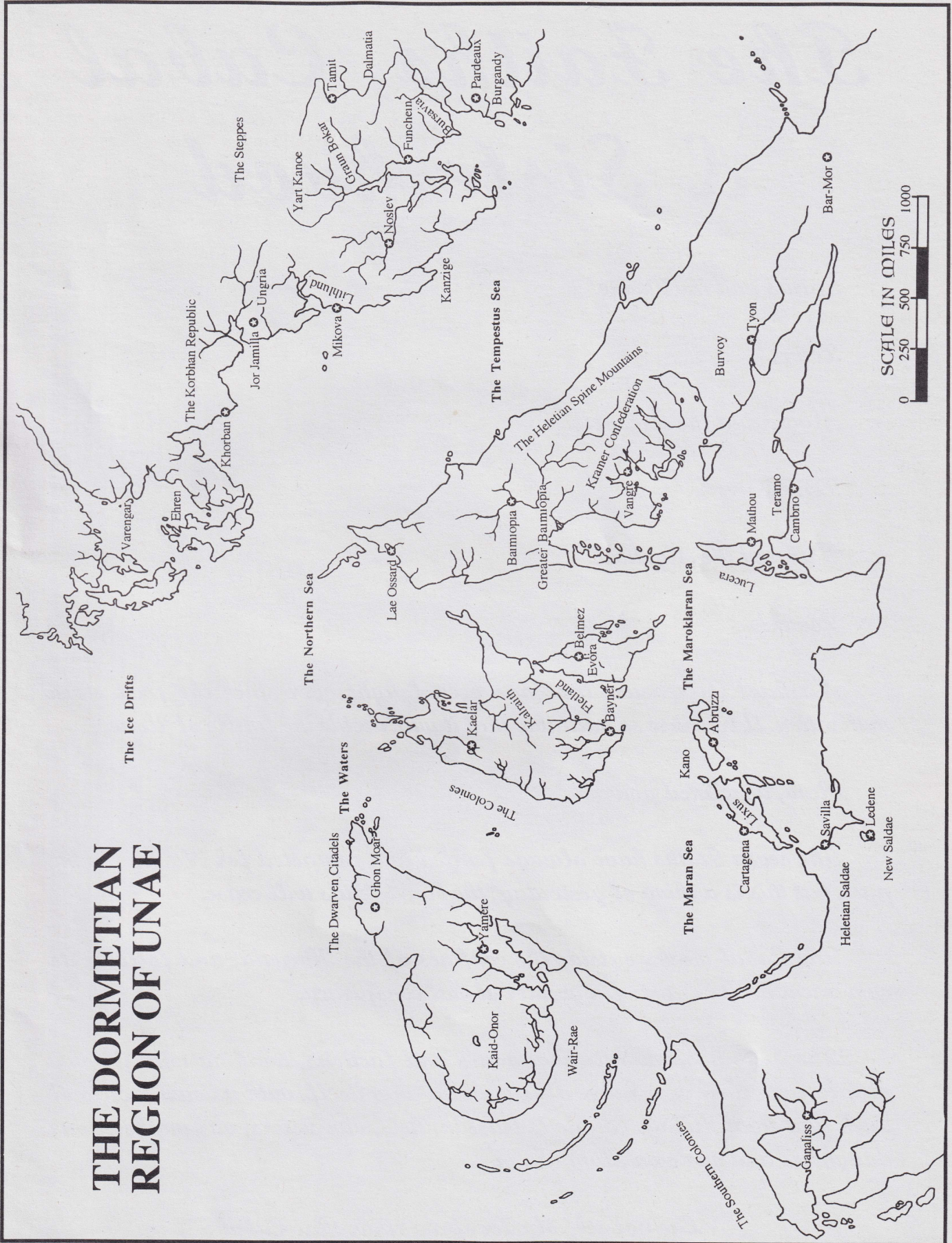
To us the truth of our naskae's existence supplies power and hope. Not only can the physical pearl be used as it is - a gift of magical potential - but it declares us in our own eyes as special, blessed by the gods. Each Dominion in its own way has harvested the Soul Pearls, something which has over the past ten millenniums given the elven race a huge storehouse of power. This is a vast arsenal of potential magic that even few elves realise could, if organised in one unified force, wipe out all life on Unae. It is this time of organisation which may be upon us, the Final Dominion. This is why this warning I secretly give you is so important; we elves hold enormous power and this power has fallen into the hands of a madman - High King Caemarou.

For hundreds of generation we have been told that we are the chosen race, that we will be elevated to a higher state of existence. Some believe we are to be made divine. Whether you believe it or not we elves are now approaching the time where we have the power to attempt such a thing. It is with such faith in our mission, our goals, and with such faith in our culture, our gods and our King, and with the power we have amassed that we claim the right to name our world for ourselves as we did after the Battle of Ansilsae, ten thousand years ago.

We call this world by a Velsanan word that means quite literally "our world" and that name is *Unae*.



THE DORMETIAN REGION OF UNAE



The Faiths, Cabal & Sisterhood

Spirits and the Divine!

Power!

Magic and the Arcane!

Power!

Will and the Mystical!

Power!

Naskae! A treasure that has been fought over since the first elven civilisation. A treasure so valuable that it will decide the future of Unae.

Raw, unrefined power!

The seven Faiths have always feuded and competed for Naskae in the past, but this is a thing of yesterday, the blood feuds will cease.

The Cabal works outside the confines of the Kinreda, and follows its own agenda. It is part of a greater global conspiracy.

The Sisterhood has its own goals and factions, working with its own people, with their own rules. It is a world unto itself, with its own secrets of dark and light. All we can do is trust in them, our sisters, our mothers, our daughters and our own High Queen.

- Lae Corster, Master of the Wair-Rae Cabal



DMAY



It is elven nature to group together.

Through the race-nation, the Fifth Dominion, which is constantly building bridges to those other scattered islands of elven culture such as Ungria, the elves will reach a golden age.

Within this unity there are many divisions, old divisions and groups that can be traced back to the bloody days of Velsana. Many of these factions were responsible, through their actions or inaction, for the fury of the elven gods. And it is the ongoing existence and feuding between these groups which most threatens the Ansilsae. The most powerful of these trouble-makers are detailed here, they are the factions which wield magic.

MAGIC IN UNAÆ: ARCANE, DIVINE, MYSTIC

Although magic exists in Unae, it is not commonly used to solve mundane problems. In Unae magic is a rare, potent and carefully conserved resource. The prevalence of magic does, however, vary from region to region depending on the popular attitude to its use. In Evora, for instance, cabalist magic is widely accepted and magically illuminated street lighting passes without undue comment. In Greater Baimiopia on the other hand, where the Cabal has been all but hunted out of existence, only the most confident of practitioners reveal their secrets to the uninitiated. In Unae magic rests in the hands of a few. Magic requires knowledge, skill, courage and an iron will to control.

To the elves, a race with magic mixed into our very blood and bones in our *naskae*, magic is not quite such a rarity. Its use in society is almost commonplace and its presence celebrated. Elven culture is surely the most magic saturated of all in Unae.

THE WAY OF THE HEART, SOUL AND MIND

Whether magic is a gift from the gods, the remnant aura of a long lost civilisation, or just some bizarre, latent phenomenon leaking from Unae's bed-rock remains a mystery. Observers of the events in Ossard suggest that magic is a tidal force affected by divine influence. The most popular theory on magic, however, is centred on the self and is known as *The Way of the Heart, Soul and Mind*.

Magic has one root and three main trunks from which grow many branches. The root of magic is our mortal sense of the universe. What we can see, touch, taste, hear, emote and believe we interpret as the world. All citizens of Unae play their part in defining this reality. Amongst the masses live a rare few with the passion (the *Heart*), the faith (the *Soul*), or the intuition (the *Mind*) to recreate reality. And what these potent individuals recreate changes what even the uninitiated experience. Such artificers can and do manipulate reality. This is magic. This ability is not an elaborate illusion, for it appears Unae gladly responds to those who practise the *Art*. Unae will change if a mage so wills it. Magic works.

PASSION, FAITH AND INTUITION

The three great boles that draw sustenance from this deep and mysterious taproot of power are aligned to the magic user via either the Heart as *Arcane Magic*, the Soul as *Faith Magic*, or the Mind manifested as *Mystic Magic*. Growing from each of these trunks are many, many branches - some broad, straight and powerful limbs such as the elemental branches of the arcane, and some precarious, twisted suckers such as the myriad lesser kults of the Terura Kala or the Horned God, all sprouting from faith.

THE HEART

Wizards power their magic through The Heart. Having studied the ways of the ancients (secrets collectively known as *Arcana*) a mage is able to tap into power of Unae which courses through his veins. By utilising arcane devices, rituals, mendicants and incantations a mage controls that power, drawing upon his own life force and the world around him to make a magical effect external to the self - a *spell*. Because mages have no reservoir of faith to draw upon (as priests do), they must augment the power for their spells by other means. Elementalists naturally draw their power from the very elements, using and manipulating earth, air, fire, wood and water for their own uses; the Sango Drajo use blood to cast their spells, sometimes their own blood, but just as often the blood of innocent victims; Necromancers call their powers from beyond the grave and command the spirits of the dead; Diabolists make pacts with avatars of celestial powers; and Illusionists conjure their spells from the surface thoughts of observers and from deeply hidden racial memories. The world-spanning organisation called the *Cabal* stores the knowledge that enables mages to tap into these many sources of magic.

Because mages use their own life energy (essence) to cast their spells, much of their apprenticeship is spent learning how to gather, store, draw from and replenish these energies. The most powerful mages are those who learn how to increase this personal store of energy so that ever more impressive spells may be cast. Elven mages, unlike their non-elven brothers and sisters, store that power inside them, in their *naskae*, the Soul Pearl. An elven apprentice learns how to gather power from celestial planes and store this in their *naskae*. Thus magic is easier for elves, not by a good deal, but undeniably it is. With our *naskae* we are made by the gods to wield magic.

Naskae is a natural form of what the Heletians call *escenco*. *Escenco* collects inside a magic-user, usually around the heart, over his long years of channelling magic forces through his body. An experienced mage's essence becomes a very potent force which, if correctly stored, can keep him alive when ordinary mortals would be slain. A species of leech from Burvoy can be used to draw off *escenco* which can then be stored in a specially prepared receptacle - usually a talisman. This store of energy is kept for casting greater spells and as a safeguard against death. As long as some small part of this essence remains in Unae a wizard's life cannot be taken. Mages who take such precautions





are very difficult to kill outright. The exception to this rule is if the wizard is attacked with a *Heart Knife* - a magical artifact whose creation includes the inscription of the mage's true name on the blood-tempered blade. Cutting with such a knife severs the link between the mage's essence and Unae. True names are closely guarded, though sometimes traded, secrets. The Cabal has in its archives the true names of all its members and, rumour has it, a Heart Knife with each true name upon it.

THE SOUL

Faith or Divine Magic is seated in the soul and derives from a shared experience and understanding of the way the world is ordered. Typically this follows a pattern or creed which is taught by the priests of that particular faith. The vast power that is generated by masses of souls believing in a god can be tapped by individuals with a deep understanding of, and a strong will to follow, that theology to its furthest extent. Only the most devout and disciplined of priests and holy warriors are able to work *miracles* or *blessings* (they never refers to them as spells).

Priests with the training, discipline and devout faith to work miracles draw on the collective faith of the religion's worshippers through a focus for that faith, usually an icon or symbol of the religion. It seems the furthest limit of that magical focus is affected by the ability of the priest and his own personal faith. All priests are able to cast petty magicks in the sanctity of their churches (such as blessing an individual), but only a few devout individuals appear able to carry this magical power to areas that could be classed as heathen to their faith. This is why only strong-willed missionaries and fanatics are able to cast spells when seemingly a world away from their nearest beloved temple.

THE MIND

The users of Mystic Magic do so through the Mind. These psions are trained to attune their intuitive vision of the world to such a fine pitch that they can magically see and alter the deep secrets of reality held within all our minds. As a result of mystic contemplation and the collective thoughts of sister minds (the great majority of mystics are female, presumably due to the intuitive nature of the sex) strange mind forces come into play. Mystics are the most secretive of magic-users, rarely straying from their normal lot in life, but always working towards their goals. As those who use arcane magic claim allegiance to the Cabal, mystics have their own organisation; the Sisterhood.

POLITICS OF MAGIC

Religions and priests abound, but even so, magic wielding priests are a minority of the total priesthood. Divine magic is largely controlled by the dominant faiths of a state; sanctioned, safe magic that the masses have been taught to accept. Unsanctioned divine magic is that of the kults; strong, diverse and generally declared illegal due to the state's inability to administer and control these groups. Magic is political.

Arcane magic as practised by mages, and mystic magic wielded by the Sisterhood is generally beyond the control of

religions or the state. Consequently conflict between the state, the Cabal, and the Sisterhood is a common point of history across Unae. Usually such a battle is a secretive one, occasionally it spills onto the streets.

MAGIC ARTIFACTS

While casters of magic are relatively rare in Unae, magical artifacts - enchanted items, potions, encrolled spells and the like - are rarer still. There are no magic shops in Unae. Magic items are not manufactured for sale. Mages respect their art too much to reduce it to the level of tawdry commerce. Nevertheless Unae is an old world; down the ages miraculous and arcane devices have been created. Anyone who does acquire a magical item is most likely will treasure it as a gift from the gods not offer it for sale. Magical weapons are passed on from father to son, through generation after generation, and magical potions and similar items are usually kept as part of a long-term contingency plan. Only the most powerful persons can afford to waste magic.

TYPES OF MAGIC

Magic knows no limits but people do. Because magic is so difficult to understand and control what is actually achieved by magic users is limited by the strengths and weaknesses of the initiated individual. Following established trails is easier than creating new paths so most cabalists, priests and mystics will draw their magic effects from a repertoire of well-researched castings. In theory these spells or miracles are equally accessible to all. In theory any mage, holy men, or psion could create a ball of explosive fire if they knew how to and so willed it. In practice, however, self-imposed restrictions exist and come into play in the following ways; if a priest follows a healing god or saint then he will only have access to healing blessings because that is all that he believes (through his faith) that he can call upon, whilst an elementalist approaches magic from an understanding of the way the elements combine to define reality and so is limited to wielding elemental magic only and is unable to use healing spells. Many spell casters do achieve a varied mix of spells, blessings or mystic powers at a petty level of ability, but they rarely can progress in that generic track without betraying their faith or specialisation. Only the strongest individuals have the heart, faith, or intuition to successfully learn and master several types of magic - such great individuals are mighty wizards indeed.

Large (state-sanctioned) faiths follow a pantheon of gods and saints who cover many fields. Their priests are only able to access blessings appropriate to their deity's specialty such as healing, battle (offensive, defensive), protection, stealth, knowledge, craft, druidic magicks and so forth. Kults (outlawed in most lands) are each focused on one branch of divine magic; Kavists use battle magic, followers of Tergaia wield druidic (earth) magic, assassins of the Mortigi Kult are blessed with stealth magicks. The Cabal has access to many branches of arcane magic, the most common forms being elementalism, blood magic, illusion, alchemy and necromancy. Within the Sisterhood there are specialities too, but the bulk of its members merely act as batteries adding power to their own local cell's castings. The Sisterhood prefers subtle modes of emotional manipulation over more spectacular displays.





THE FIVE FAITHS

Dormetia is a wide, sprawling place. From the rain soaked valleys of Wair-Rae and its arch-enemy Kaid-Onor, to the ogre infested peaks of the Heletian Spine and the fertile Sidian Valley there are many strong faiths, the state faiths. These sanctioned religions bring to Dormetia wonders, miracles, blessings and death. They have laid order across Dormetia, but they have also delivered war. These faiths are a double-edged blessing, for with their compassion for their own they also bring intolerance of outsiders, and with their promises of eternal salvation they deliver threats of final damnation.

FAITH IN WAIR-RAE

There are five legal faiths in elven society, jointly they are the elven pantheon, known collectively as the *Kinreda*. Beyond these five there are two more religions. These other faiths are actively persecuted and their followers hunted down. Each of these seven faiths are detailed below.

Many things have contributed towards each previous Dominions's fall, but nothing more so than the feuding within the Five Faiths. When Old Wair-Rae was approaching what looked to be its zenith sixteen hundred years ago High King Radere demanded that the elven faiths form a united council to be used at the very least for direct communication. This demand was accepted by the faiths as it presented much in the way of opportunity for spying, and at that time no argument had set any faith strongly against another for well over a century.

HIDDEN AGENDAS

All faiths in Dormetia, including the Kinreda, have their own righteous goals and aims. Some of these are secret and never disclosed publicly. The most sinister involve the collection of the magical substance known as essence, or by the Heletian name, *escenco*. This powder is a form of raw magic, and is much sought after by those of the Cabal, Sisterhood and all faiths. This blue powder is a priceless commodity, mined from a terrible source, the bodies of practitioners of magic and elves. In the elven body the *escenco* is quickly harvested by removing the *naskae*. From non-elven bodies the process is more difficult and requires skill in alchemy as the heart must be cut from the still-living mage and the *escenco* within it harvested with special apparatus and alchemical rituals that include filtering the mage's essence through mercury. Needless to say, as elves have a special organ which stores the substance, they will always hold more of the precious stuff than a non-elf. Even an elf with no magical ability holds a *naskae* full of *escenco*.

The elven race holds within it a treasure, one that we are bound by their belief in the *Ansilsae* to guard and protect. It is the *naskae*, a drop of magic, a divine touch, that styles us elves as different, celestial and superior beings. When an elf dies far from home his fellows will remove the *naskae* and return it to his house. Such a treasure is never left uncollected unless the elf dies alone and beyond the reach of his kin - a much feared fate.

THE KINREDA

The five sanctioned churches of Wair-Rae worship five gods. The mortal head of each of these churches has great powers, divine and temporal. Each one also sits on the council known as the *Lu Konsenarde*, a council headed by High King Caemarou that regulates and co-ordinates the actions of the Kinreda within the Fifth Dominion.

The five churches are dedicated to the following gods: Culann, Father of Craftsmen; Dylann, Friend of Healers and Scholars; Teteri, Keeper of Nature; Andrasta, Lady of War; and Pennardum Goddess of Honour, Love and Duty.

These faiths, their often bitter relations with each other and their current unification are expanded below.

Culann - Father of Craftsmen

Culann and his brother, the primal force known as Pordanamor, are the two eldest of the elven gods. Culann is the father of Dylann, Teteri and Andrasta, and partner to Pennardum. He is god of craftsmen, farmers and many others who work with their hands. He is the father of the elven race. He is most often seen as a middle-aged elven male with brown hair and finely tailored but practical clothing. He is symbolised by tools.

Culann, the craftsmen, was greatly angered by the elven race's destructive folly at the Battle of *Ansilsae*. It was he who decreed that the race would face damnation if the battle continued.

Disposition Good-natured but short tempered.

Temples Temples are found in all elven cities and towns, even the smallest of villages holding generous shrines to the race's all-father. Most temples are laid out to a floor plan that gives them a long main hall. The insides are beautified by faithful craftsmen, but never garishly. Wood carving and stonework are the more common forms of decoration.

The major temple of Culann is found in *Lae Bareth*, and presided over by High Priest *Valar Jhae*.

Holy Days Any time that is special to the faithful. For example, the first day of harvest amongst farming villages is celebrated as Culann's Day. Amongst town-dwelling artisans Culann's holy days are held on the biggest annual market days, or on the day that apprentices are tested for graduation to their master class. Such festivals are marked by a special service held by a priest where offerings of the products of the faithful's craft are burnt on a pyre during boisterous celebrations.

Symbols Culann has two main symbols, an upheld hand with the fingers spread, and any craft tool. The tool symbol is most often used by his followers among artisans. For example, a blacksmith may elect to use the hammer as his icon for Culann.

Priesthood The priesthood demands celibacy. It takes male and female initiates, but only from professions that are relevant to the faith such as farmers, artisans and artists. An initiate serves out a five year term before being properly titled a priest.

Mortal Head *Valar Jhae* is a great uncle to Caemarou and a fervent supporter of the High King. Prone to divinely inspired ranting it is said that it was he who convinced Caemarou to stop after siring four sons. Court gossip says Culann sent his High Priest a vision showing how a woman of the royal line would betray House Quor Budasa just as Andrasta had betrayed Culann.





Blessings While Culann does not support war he has been known to bless weapons in his temples that have been made with the ultimate care and diligence. Priests of Culann can use manipulative, healing and defensive magicks. Any offensive magicks called for by the priest will result in a curse.

Curses Culann often tests his young priests by fomenting situations for them that can be resolved in one of two ways, either peacefully, or in combat. The successful completion of the test obviously rests in the passive answer. Priests that please Culann will progress, others lose his blessings.

Strictures Culann will only allow the taking of lives in self-defence and in the fulfilment of the Ansilsae which he sees as something necessary to bring a lasting eternal peace upon Unae.

Allies Culann and those of his faith have an affinity for Pennardum, Culann's wife, and his sons Teteri and Dylann.

Enemies Culann shares a mutual animosity with his daughter, Andrasta, Lady of War. He despises the damage and carnage she brings. He is a creator, she the destroyer. He despises Terura.

Pennardum - Honour, Love & Duty

Mother to Teteri, Andrasta and Dylann, partner to Culann and also mother to the elven race. Pennardum is the symbol of elven life; she is goddess of honour, love and duty. She is often pictured as a radiant woman of middle years with flowing auburn curls. She is the definition of elven grace and beauty.

While she is celebrated as the font of the elven race, she has a hidden side. In the shadows she cries of her shame and sadness, for the folly of her feuding husband and only daughter Andrasta, the Lady of War. The secret that has broken the divine family is that of Andrasta's child, Terura, corrupt god of darkness and evil.

Disposition Understanding, even-handed, caring, sorrowing.

Temples A specific shape or style is not repeated throughout the many temples to the mother of the elven race. Instead the common themes are sites of serenity or great beauty and an altar upon a colourfully decorated stage. The abundant use of colour is a common mark of Pennardum. It showcases her love and vitality, it also hides within itself many moods and feelings.

The major temple of Pennardum, the Melsanda, can be found in Lae Bareth in Wair-Rae. It is a site of breath-taking beauty tinged with regret presided over by High Priestess Rescartar.

Holy Days The most holy day of the year for the followers of Pennardum is the first day of spring. In every elven town on this day festivals are held that mix the rites of fertility, the celebration of the young and the veneration of the old and wise; a celebration dedicated to life.

Symbols Many symbols are used for Pennardum. From the heart to the rainbow, acorn and the white dove. Often many are used together in a mixture of colours in great works of art.

Priesthood The priesthood is made up exclusively of women. They are all to be celibate and must endure a time of training and learning of lore that usually involves touring at least a half dozen convents. This time of travel and schooling takes at least two years and often up to six.

Mortal Head Rescartar is a commoner elf who arose through her great piety and deeds to head of Pennardum's church. Her background is no longer held as a weapon against her as it was in her early days as High Priestess. Her strength is respected by all

in the Kinreda and Court. Tales from her days of pilgrimage are used to inspire the younger initiates.

Blessings The priestesses of Pennardum can call upon the magicks of combat (offence and defence), protection and divination. Spells dealing with illusion, manipulation and deceit are never made available.

Curses Pennardum's priestesses often go on long pilgrimages before rising in station. Such trials are taken by setting off for distant convents during which time they honour their faith by serving any in need of their help. Such tests of endurance, strength, willpower, devotion and faith often take up to a decade. The priestesses of Pennardum are so numerous that the fact that half of them may be walking the back roads of Wair-Rae is of no concern to Rescartar.

Strictures The followers of Pennardum are taught to lead a just life by living with honour, love and by fulfilling their duties. Any sort of criminal activity or dishonesty which would put one's integrity in question is frowned upon.

Allies Culann is her strongest ally, and Dylann a favoured son. While she will never admit it she has trouble dealing with Teteri because of the similarities between him and Pordanamor.

Enemies Pennardum despises Pordanamor for what he did to her daughter Andrasta. She, like all the elven gods, reviles Terura for being the abomination he is. She also resents the hurt caused to her husband, Culann by her only daughter Andrasta. She grieves for the disharmony in her family.

Dylann - Friend of Healers

Dylann is an enigma to many elves, he is a god of healing and knowledge. He is followed by the passive, the caring, the scholarly and the artistic (when they choose to not follow Culann). This son of Pennardum and Culann has much to do with the intricacies of the pillar-cities and in many ways is a god representing progress and compassion. His brother, Teteri, is a wild man, and prone to the serenity and fury that is nature, while his sister Andrasta, the Lady of War fails to appreciate his passive ways. These three siblings often fight despite the despair this causes their parents.

Dylann is seen as a handsome, blonde-headed man with one golden ring in his right ear. He always wears the simple white tunic and travel pants of the healers who serve in his name.

Disposition Always caring, understanding and helpful, optimistic and inquiring.

Temples Every house of the sick, dying or hospital in elven society will hold at least an altar to Dylann, many will be built adjacent to, or include a full temple if the size of the institution warrants it. Temple design is most often based on an equal-tailed cross. One of the tails will be the entry, the other three will be curtained or partitioned off from the central area and used for grieving, offerings and blessings. Where no hospital is available the temple will be used as a house for the sick and these areas are the wards. Dylann's temples are white-washed, with stain-glassed windows allowing plentiful light inside where arrangements of fresh flowers are used to beautify the interior. Further adornment is not required, being viewed as frivolous and unnecessary.

Shrines to Dylann can also be found in libraries and universities where the scholar aspect of the god is venerated.





Holy Days The summer solstice is the beginning of a celebration of life and healing, a festival called Jesda Bae which will last three days. The winter solstice is observed in a five day ritual, the Rura-Bar, which mourns the passing of relatives, friends and loved ones. During the Rura-Bar, windows inside Dylann's temples are draped with black curtains, the priests don black robes, and the faithful wear an item of black clothing.

Symbols Dylann has several symbols, the most common being a white heart on a red background, an open book, or a single eye with a gold iris shedding a blue tear.

Priesthood The priesthood of Dylann is open to both men and women and celibacy is not a requirement, nor is it encouraged. Regardless of this many priests choose not to wed or take partners. Initiates spend a short term of usually not longer than one year before they are sent on tours of duty. Only priests who are no longer capable of travel due to injury or age are settled permanently into a temple as a healer or in a university position teaching medicine.

Mortal Head High Priest Sabana is a man of unrivalled girth, it takes eight strong elves to carry his litter chair into the Lu Konsenarde council chambers. A younger son of the House Begonis, Sabana is a supreme conservative who resists all change. His enemies whisper lurid rumours of disgusting orgies held in his private quarters in Lae Bareth. Surely these are false for Dylann would not tolerate such excesses.

Blessings Priests of Dylann are trained extensively in how to save lives. From wound dressing to basic field surgery (such as amputations). Dylann also bestows on his priests the ability to heal as a divine gift. This gift speeds up the normal healing of the sick or wounded at quadruple their normal rate for one day. Most priests have the capacity to give such a divine gift twice a day, each gift must be followed by one hour of uninterrupted meditation, prayer and rest. Harmful magicks are unavailable.

Curses Any priest of Dylann who spills blood in a temple of their lord in an act of aggression will be marked. Effectively the priest is stripped of his or her abilities, abandoned by Dylann and cursed to die a terrible death. The counter to this curse is the blessing that a priest of Dylann is immune to attack when touching the main altar of his temple. The faith of such priests is that they cannot be struck, Dylann himself is shielding them.

Strictures The priests of Dylann swear to only kill in self defence, and to offer aid to any who need it unless the wounded or sick is someone of a rival faith in which case their own god can save them. They are also charged with protecting and furthering knowledge and removing ignorance, a sacred charge that High Priest Sabana's attitude seems directly opposed to!

Allies Dylann is closely aligned with his mother and father due to their passive and caring views.

Enemies Dylann has a great deal of trouble dealing his sister, Andrasta, Lady of War and his wild brother Teteri. He will not deal at all with Pordanamor and hates Terura

Teteri - Keeper of Nature

Teteri is known as the Keeper of Nature, the Lord of the Wild and Shepherd of the Mad. He represents the most primal forces in the elven psyche. Often represented as a broad elf with dark eyes and long flowing dark hair he appears brooding and menacing.

Teteri is the son of Culann and Pennardum, he is the most roguish of their offspring, doing what he wills, driven by wild mood swings, pursuing goals that only he knows.

Disposition Unpredictable, quick to anger, energetic.

Temples Any place of natural beauty can become a temple to Teteri. His shrines are never roofed, they are always open places such as hill tops, bays, small islands, groves and springs. Such places are marked by an altar and nothing more. The only decoration is the site's natural grandeur. Many asylums hold a small shrine to Teteri.

Holy Days The first day of each season marks the beginning of a three day festival that celebrates the coming time. The summer and winter solstices are also celebrated with a special day of rites and prayers that unfold as the sun rises and sets.

Symbols Teteri has many symbols such as the wild wolf, the oak tree and the sun.

Priesthood Priests often wear green or grey robes and spend most of their lives indentured to a series of sacred sites in the wilderness (temples). As the priest becomes more valued by Teteri he or she is elevated in status by moving onto more important sites. Initiates can be of either sex and serve for the passing of two solstices before being named a priest.

Mortal Head Boramunda, a powerful and energetic man with a keen intellect, has only recently assumed the position after his predecessor, Cotallan, succumbed to madness and had to be locked into an asylum. Boramunda has declared war against all followers of the so-called First Faith and supports the King's plans so that he can exorcise this "evil" from Unae.

Blessings Priests of Teteri follow his natural path by using druidic magic. The most powerful will eventually gain use of elemental magic, but this takes at least a decade of service.

Curses Each priest upon reaching such a status from the title of initiate will be given the charge of a sacred site or spirit. It might be a grove of trees, a spring or a wolf pack. If such a sacred thing is destroyed or killed while in the priest's charge he or she will be cursed by Teteri. If a priest is to travel away from a site for a time than he or she will need to make arrangements with either magical blessings or mortal help to protect their charge. Responsibility for a particular sacred site is lost when a new, more important site is given to the progressing priest's care.

Strictures Be mindful of the ways of nature and its balance. Be caring and sympathetic to the mad. Show no mercy towards the followers of Pordanamor who trespass on Teteri's holy grounds.

Allies Teteri is supported most closely by his sister, Andrasta, the Lady of War.

Enemies Teteri finds difficulty in dealing with his father, Culann and his brother Dylann. He despises Pordanamor and often has many feuds with him and his followers over the ownership of sacred sites. Teteri hates Terura doubly.

Andrasta - Lady of War

Daughter of Culann and Pennardum, Andrasta was born the Lady of War. She is always pictured as a tall elven woman heaving sword and holding shield with a bow over her shoulder.

Andrasta has long held a shared animosity with her father, Culann who is a pacifist. They have never agreed since she came of age. The Ansilsae prophecy is a ruling of the elven pantheon





which she strongly disagrees with as it prohibits fighting between elven groups and undercuts her faith and power base.

To spite her father after the Ansilsae prophecy was given she laid with Culann's brother, Pordanamor, spawning the abomination, Terura. Repelled and repentant after the birth of her illegitimate son Andrasta ordered an avatar, Kae, to kill the infant. This murderous deed the battle spirit could not do. When Andrasta realised this Kae was ordered away from her, the skulking spirit going back to the hidden babe, Terura, and nursing it to manhood. Kae's bitterness at his expulsion rubbed off on Terura until the day when Terura felt the need for the spirit no longer and killed him in combat.

The birth of Terura haunts Andrasta, and she tries to forget it by involving herself in the wars of conquest that the elves bring to the other races of Unae. Until she deals with this terrible past, however, it and her son will threaten all of elven kind.

Disposition Furious, vengeful, honourable and strong willed.

Temples Generally her temples are simple enough buildings, but the older they get the more ornamentation that will appear in the form of captured banners, battle honours, murals of war and trophies. The floors of all her temples are laid above catacombs that hold the remains of her greatest warriors. All cities, towns and villages hold at the very least a shrine to Andrasta. In most cases a temple is one of the first buildings constructed in the new territories of a Dominion, so even the smallest of villages may hold a purpose-built stone temple. The oldest temple to Andrasta still in use is in Ungria, the head-temple is in Lae Bareth.

The war colleges, barracks and garrisons of Wair-Rae's preparing armed forces all feature a shrine to Andrasta.

Holy Days The fifth day of summer is celebrated annually as

the anniversary of the Battle of Ansilsae, the last great battle of Velsana. Many other battle days and victories in prior Dominions have local celebrations dedicated to the honour of their memory.

Symbols The most common symbol for Andrasta is a pair of crossed swords in front of a round shield.

Priesthood Men or women can become priests of Andrasta. Only warriors of good training and active service may enter the priesthood. Before the title can be held the faithful must complete the training of an initiate for the time of one year.

Mortal Head War-Mother Serica, a scion of House Jenn, was a great warrior who figured prominently in the events New Moon's Night. The young High King never forgot this and assisted in her swift rise to head of the Church of Andrasta. A strong supporter to the king she rules the Church with an iron grip that weeds out all weakness with ruthless efficiency.

Blessings All battle and defensive magicks are available to the priests of Andrasta. After many years of service divination and some elemental magicks may also be granted to highly accomplished battle-priests.

Curses Any priest of Andrasta who defies the strictures of the faith is cursed. A spirit guard of avatars will descend to Unae to bring the accused before Andrasta for a trial by combat with an battle spirit, usually to the death.

Strictures Honour in battle, respect your enemy. Kill cleanly. Murder is a crime, and those who carry out such deeds should always be punished. Never attack a defenceless opponent.

Allies The main ally of Andrasta is her brother, Teteri.

Enemies She has not spoken to Pordanamor since their meeting which led to the birth of Terura. She shares animosity with her father, Culann and has completely disowned her son, Terura.



dm





THE SIXTH FAITH

Andrasta is said to have lain with the first god of the elves, Pordanamor, father of the world, to beget Terura. According to the Kinreda, Pordanamor and Culann are brothers, and it was Pordanamor who made Unae, but he was not smart, patient or good with his hands. It took a craftsman, Culann, to finish the job that Pordanamor had started so life would best take root. Pennardum watched all this, and fell for the smarter of the two brothers, taking Culann as her husband. Pordanamor stormed off to another place, the sparks of his fury lighting the night skies.

After many years he returned to the world he had begun as some of the elves secretly called him by practising the First Faith. Once here he found the children of his brother, the elves, who he largely ignored and avoided.

On the fateful day of the Battle of Ansilsae the Lady of War, Andrasta, fled her father fuming over the promise of ever-lasting peace Culann and the others had given to the elves. In her rage Andrasta sought a way to hurt her father and looked to Pordanamor his estranged brother for an ally.

To Pordanamor's eyes Andrasta looked much like her mother, the love he had lost to Culann. Andrasta's rash youth and anger coupled with Pordanamor's energy and raw longing created a tempestuous union that resulted in an unwanted child who was thrown to the will of the cosmos. Andrasta, her anger quelled, fled in shame, and Pordanamor, his desires sated sought an uneasy reconciliation with Culann. The child was called by fate to be Terura, and became twisted in his sad time of loneliness, eventually to shatter into a hundred aspects of evil. That which the Heletians call the Horned God was born.

Terura is the cast out son of Andrasta and Pordanamor, left alone as an infant to die. Unfortunately he has grown strong feeding on the anger at his rejection and the hatred of his parents, and fuelled by the regret that aches in every elven heart at the turmoil the Ansilsae prophecy brings to our history. Any elf with a grievance against the established order inevitably becomes seduced by the promise of power that Terura offers them.

The Sixth Faith is known amongst the elves as the Terura Kala. Exposed of such kulta are exiled from elven society. Many of these faithful are forced to leave Wair-Rae to enter the wilds of Kaid-Onor. There they join with others of similar persuasions who are known to the clans of Kaid-Onor as the *Mallum Kurtae* (the Lost Ones). Generally these kultists are hunted down when discovered by the Kaid-Onor clans, but sometimes their large numbers, and the power of their priests are such that the kultists are left unmolested, allowed passage or even given payments, stock and shelter, or whatever they demand. This weakness brings shame on Kaid-Onor.

Within Wair-Rae itself there are many who follow the Terura Kala. While never openly admitting such beliefs the signs can often be seen by those who know what to look for. A taint is on them. Although there are fewer followers of the Terura Kala when compared to the general population than there are Horned God kultists within the Heletian League, the elven kultists are better organised, with networks that span the whole nation and continents. With sinister links to the Cabal and Sisterhood, the Terura Kala is a huge threat to the Fifth Dominion and the

prophecy of elven supremacy. It is for this reason that its followers are so reviled by the rest of elven kind.

With few restrictions on the practising of magic in Wair-Rae or its colonies (unlike the laws that drive magic users underground in the Heletian League) the priests of the Terura Kala can easily disguise themselves as cabalists, openly performing their simpler and more sedate rites on the streets in the guise of charlatans. Unbeknownst to High King Caemarou, his chief entertainer, the charlatan Waildormin, is actually a lowly priest of the Terura Kala, whose every performance in front of the High King curses his reign, tainting the glory of the Fifth Dominion.

Disposition Splintered, twisted, furious, jealous, unrestrained, cunning, malicious and ruthless.

Temples Temples are made wherever possible, they do not follow a set design. They are nearly always dark and hold only ornamentation that glorifies the image of Terura, a huge winged and broad-horned elf. Dominant colours are red, purple and black. Braziers often are used for lighting and the air is thick with the burning of herbs and incense. Most temples are secretly hidden away in the basements of homes and buildings, sometimes they can be found in caves, or the sewers of cities hidden anywhere where there is little chance of discovery.

Holy Days The winter solstice was the day of Terura's birth and is celebrated from dusk to dawn on the eve of that day.

Symbols The Terura Kala is broken into many smaller kulta following different aspects of Terura's nature so symbols vary from kult to kult. For example, a golden dagger is used by the kult of murder, a horned skull with a long red tongue is used by the kult of seduction. There are dozens of kulta and many more aspects without organised worshippers.

Priesthood The priests of Terura are very often self-taught individuals who receive a calling from their god when their dark emotions overwhelm them. Initiates spend a very short time in training to become a priest, but a much longer time in making progress through the ranks of the priesthood. It is very difficult for priests to learn new skills and lore in isolation, as they are usually unable to meet their fellows for fear of raising the suspicions of others.

Mortal Head People speak in fearful tones of legendary Ku-Hura, the witch-priest head of the Sixth Faith. This terrible woman has never been properly identified, and seemingly has been alive for countless centuries, appearing at various times all over the Hidden Empire of the Horned God. Some say Ku-Hura is a folk tale used to frighten children to sleep, others believe she is the most powerful kultist ever to live on Unae.

Blessings The kinds of blessings called upon by Terura's followers will depend on what kult (or aspect) they follow. The kult of murder supplies stealth magic, while the kult of death specialises in necromantic magic. Pestilence and corruptive magicks are used by the kult priests who lead the vermin clans.

Curses Any who turn from the faith of Terura are cursed to die very horrible deaths.

Strictures None.

Allies None.

Enemies All of the other elven gods.





THE FIRST FAITH

Pordanamor is more a force than a god. It is true that he is the brother of Culann, but Pordanamor is also the divine expression of the elements which combined many years ago and created Unae. This faith is an old, timeless one of nature worship, something similar to the faith of Teteri but even less regimented and far more primal.

The First Faith is considered illegal due to the wishes of the other faiths rather than any true corrupting influence that the Kinreda might claim. Most followers of the faith can be found in quiet rural areas and in the serene Southern Colonies. It is blasphemy to say so, but perhaps this is the one true faith that can lead the elves to harmony in this world.

Disposition Best described in one word; neutral.

Temples Places of great natural beauty.

Holy Days Summer and winter solstice.

Symbols The sun.

Priesthood The priesthood is a loosely organised druidical order open to men and women. Initiates spend a good year or two in training before being given their missions.

Mortal Head None acknowledged.

Blessings All druidic and elemental magic is available to priests, plus defensive magic after half a decade of learning.

Curses Any faithful who switch to Teteri have their souls and their naskae given to Terura. Slowly the person concerned will sicken; after months of lethargy and pain, finally, they will die.

Strictures The natural path, and the justice of nature must be allowed to unfold. Unnatural acts such as necromancy are forbidden and should be stopped.

Allies None

Enemies All the elven faiths.

THE WAIR-RAE CABAL

The Cabal is a global organisation of mages. In many ways, the Cabal operates like a large guild. While it has a guiding philosophy of propagating knowledge, encouraging research and the use of arcane magic, there are many sub-groups within the Cabal that push their own agendas. These divisions generally stay beneath the surface, often consisting of nothing more sinister than stacking the vote at a meeting to decide which apprentices will be advanced to mage status. Each branch is headed by its most powerful practitioner, such a post is gained by challenges and duels. A Cabal Master can be from any of the schools of magic, regardless of whether they be Sango Drajo, elemental, illusionist, diabolist, or necromancer. The political boundaries of Wair-Rae also describe the influence of the Wair-Rae branch of the Cabal.

AIMS OF THE CABAL

The Cabal serves as a means for advancing the study of arcane magic, with mages using the network to test their theories, pass on their discoveries and to learn new techniques. Over the millennia, a vast store of magical knowledge has been built up and this is the Cabal's greatest treasure, a treasure housed in secret locations across Unae. Most branches have access to copies of the many magical texts, the Arcana, that have resulted from the combined knowledge of thousands of mages, but no single Cabal has access to them all. Each Cabal has a number of mages whose sole task is to ensure that these texts do not fall into the wrong hands. The Wair-Rae branch of the Cabal holds its knowledge in two locations, two-thirds of the material is in Yamere, the remainder in Lae Yamere. Both are held on the top levels of the Cabal's pillar-towers in both cities, and all is carefully guarded.

Most who choose to become mages do so because of some inner feeling, a calling, but not of a spiritual nature. Only by allying themselves with an experienced mage can they take their unique talents and become a mage in their own right. Upon taking an apprenticeship a young magic-user must enlist in the Cabal and the Cabal Master of his branch divines his true name. The true name is often the name the individual was given at birth, but it can also be in some cases a name that the celestial world has for him or her. Your true name can give people power over you, so a false name must be chosen for day to day dealings and introductions. The true name will be forever stored in the safest of places by the Cabal, with only the Cabal Master able to retrieve such information. Should a cabalist ever turn *Renegade* then his or her true name will be broadcast magically to cabalists everywhere with orders for their death.

THE ELVEN SUB-BRANCHES

While much has been said in certain high circles within the Heletian League regarding the "weakness" of links between the elven Cabals and the other branches of the organisation, much of this gossip is gibberish. The truth of the matter is that the Wair-Rae Cabal and its sub-branches are more than ready to work with human branches, yes, even the Flet branches. The Cabal recognises no higher authority or allegiance. We members of the Wair-Rae Cabal are all cabalists before we are elves. Believe it.

The Wair-Rae branch of the Cabal holds over three thousand members with a further three thousand in various stages of training. It is headed by *Lae Corster* (The Master) and he has held his post for four hundred and sixty three years. This Elementalist is a very accomplished Cabalist, having personally called many of the pillar-towers of Yamere into being. But he has also gained many enemies for his refusal to step down from his post.

With the promise of further heights to be reached in the ascending Fifth Dominion competition for the right to head the Wair-Rae Cabal has intensified. Traditionally the head of the elven branch has always stepped down after a fifty year term, making room for new blood to push the purposes of the Cabal further whilst the retiring master will often go into seclusion to





pursue research into the deeper mysteries of the Arcana, especially those secrets that promise immortality. Lae Corster has instead indulged his desire to stay in command and also taken the necessary steps to magically prolong his life.

With the birthing of such a grand age of conquest and domination many able elven cabalists who feel that they have been overlooked by Lae Corster's personal greed have started to talk amongst their fellows. Now, for the first time in its history, factions are opening within the Wair-Rae Cabal, factions that support particular candidates or methods of resolving the current dispute. Lae Corster seems to be completely unaware of his enemies as he sits atop his pillar-tower, Adamantis, in Yamere, where he now spends much of his time communing with the spirits of the elements.

The five largest factions in the Wair-Rae Cabal are detailed below, along with their leaders and allegiances.

The Bloods

This faction is made up of the majority of Wair-Rae Sango Drajo, the blood drinkers (often considered the most ruthless of mages, powering their research and magic by sacrificing their own blood and that of others). It is this group that is expected to make the first move to try to depose Lae Corster.

With around three hundred cabalists aligned behind the charismatic diabolist, Sar Baermor, and a power base that is heavily concentrated in the territories of the Colonies, Serhaem and Lae Ossard, it could be said that the Bloods represent the offensive and potential force of the Fifth Dominion. While Sar Baermor does not have the convenience to be quickly able to summon her followers together, the wide influence over the areas that they hold their abodes in, and the resources they can call upon, makes the Bloods a formidable faction.

The Elementalist

The Elementalist are the only group supporting Lae Corster's continuation as head of the Wair-Rae branch of the Cabal. The faction is lead by an old elf known as Lae Senni (The Wind) who is reputedly more accomplished than his close friend, the current master. The faction is dominated, as the name suggests, by elementalist and most of Lae Corster's close allies. In all they number over two hundred, with many handling scholarly duties in the capital, Yamere, where the vast majority are based. An examination of the group would show all members with only one or two exceptions to be well over three hundred years old. The faction is largely considered to be the Old School, a quaint relic of the Fourth Dominion by those who would put it in less kind words. Yet this old dog still has strong jaws.

The Assassins

The Assassins represent one of the most radical groups within the Wair-Rae Cabal, with its members prepared to kill Lae Corster should the chance present itself. Such an attitude makes many of the faction's one hundred members borderline renegades, which illustrates most vividly how Lae Corster's insistence on holding onto power has fractured the Wair-Rae branch.

The Assassins are mostly found in the southern coastal districts of Wairanir and the nearby newly established Southern Colonies. Other factions hold the belief that the Assassins are all talk and no action. The truth lies somewhere in between.

Shae Lae Winsan, a mage specialising in combat magic and shadowmancy is the head of this faction. She is followed loyally by her supporters, many of whom are also only one century old.

The Blues

The Blues are a small faction of elven loyalists who believe High King Caemarou is beyond a doubt right to claim the Fifth and Final Dominion has been born. The seventy members of the faction are prepared to give their all for the new nation and their beloved High King. They are fanatical and very dangerous.

Lead by the mysterious Orbana, a female Sango Drajo of impressive power whose background is uncertain, they claim to hold many powerful positions throughout elven society and the Cabal. Lae Corster and his followers currently enjoy the support of this faction. The Cabal Master considers the Blues as the most potentially dangerous of the Cabal's factions and consequently works hard to keep them on his side. The best way he has found to achieve this is to conduct Cabal business as the High King deems fit. Eventually the Cabal will have to abandon such a policy. When this happens a split between the two factions will emerge, and with almost the entire Blues group being established in Yamere alongside the Elementalist faction, an arcane feud in the capital seems to be the only likely result.

The Spirits

This is one of the smallest of the factions, but perhaps one of the most dangerous. With only fifty members, the Spirits represent every necromancer in Wair-Rae who is a member of the Cabal. Together they could raise the dead of all previous Dominions and cover the world in elven carrion. In recent years they have turned against the Cabal Master, and in the past six months have been near to completely silent. The Spirits are obviously planning something, but none can divine what. This faction is not known to have a leader.

THE KAI-ONOR SUB-BRANCH

The Kaid-Onor Cabal claims one thousand one hundred and fifty members, many of whom accompany their nomadic tribes, or have settled in the hundreds of small villages. Little organisation is maintained and communication between the mages is generally done by magical means with the occasional meeting. The head of the Kaid-Onor Cabal is Voe Unae, a middle-aged elementalist who lives with his tribe in a hidden valley. He also specialises in illusions, meaning none ever find his tribe or valley unless he so wishes it. The path into the deep valley is so full of illusions and pranks it marks Voe Unae as one of the greatest jokers ever to live.



THE WAIR-RAE SISTERHOOD

Mystics are organised into a large secret society known as The Sisterhood. Little is known about this society outside of its ranks, and much of what is heard is only rumour. The one thing that is certain is that the membership of the Sisterhood is exclusively female. My sources tell me that some male mystics are born, but these minds are rarely allowed to grow to maturity as the Sisterhood quickly identifies them in infancy and mind burns them. Those rare male mystics who do pass undetected into adulthood are confused and untrained and will often become insane or commit suicide.

There are many areas of Unae where the word mystic is synonymous with witch, but not in Wair-Rae. In Wair-Rae, instead of contending with ignorance and superstition the Sisterhood has to deal directly with a male dominated society that is already well and truly overloaded with factions and rivals. The Sisterhood is well aware of sense of intimidation and unease that their mystic abilities create in these male-led groups. It is for this reason that they conduct most of their business in secret, their hidden society allows no written record of their history to exist. The Sisterhood passes on all of its teachings orally and mystically, from the experienced mentor to her students.

I personally have my doubts about the goals of the Sisterhood, but I have no hard evidence to call on. The thoughts of these women are closely guarded secrets. Those who will speak say that while a vacuum of information breeds ignorance, when the amount of information is so large and its ramifications are so huge even superstitious ignorance is better for the masses than the full truth. What I do know is that the Sisterhood is organised into many local groups known as Cells. Each Cell comprises of up to twenty members who organise the testing and initiation of new recruits. At the centre of each cell is a Matriarch - the guide, teacher and focus of the Cell.

The individual power of most of the Sisterhood members is slight and effectively benign, usually involving surface readings of the mind, while the stronger members may specialise in being able to reshape a mind. However, it is when the minds of the members of the Cell are linked into a disciplined unit known as a Cell Mind that they become truly powerful, as they form a mystic force that is greater than the sum of their parts. It is usually the Cell Matriarch who focuses and shapes the cell mind.

It is this ability to link their minds that the Sisterhood guards as a jealous secret and no one is initiated into their ranks until they have undergone a strict mind probe to determine their dedication to the cause. Sisterhood members enter the group consciousness by focusing their minds. This activation of the cell mind causes a joining of power known as a Mystic Ring, and when its energy peaks the group releases it toward accomplishment of a goal, such as a spell. If powerful magicks are being wrought there is always a danger that a mistake could cause the energy build-up to backfire, causing harm to the cell mind and its members. Shocked male family members sometimes discover mind-burned mothers, wives or sisters who they had never previously suspected of being mystics.

THE AIMS OF THE ELVEN SISTERHOOD

Cells of the elven Sisterhood represent some of the strongest in this truly global organisation. Such strong cells are involved in many things, surprisingly many of them at odds with the current direction of Wair-Rae and the elven race in general.

While the Sisterhood is a place of secrets it is suggested that the cells of Wair-Rae and her colonies hold well over thirty five thousand members. With Kaid-Onor included the number of elven mystics surely tops forty thousand. With so much potential power being trained and developed it can only be asked; Why?

Several answers stand to this question. Many Sisters are empathes, a mystic skill that most sisters can either master independently or through the cell mind. The many minds of the elven Sisterhood ache at the suffering coming from the Heletian League. Oh, how they ache. In cities such as the Holy City of Baimiopia and Cartagena there are hundreds of sisters locked in dark cells where their only company is the perpetual dripping of water, the soft caress of unseen spiders and the gnawing of rats. Many of these sisters have been chained to their cells charged with witchery, tortured and left to die. Most stare through unseeing eyes into the black stillness of their cells where they are neither fed nor tended. They have entered a deep trance, their minds having fled their bodies. Sustained by the sympathy of Sisterhood cells across Unae they survive, in return emanating only despair and depression. I've heard that the Sisterhood is planning some sort of liberation for these poor souls. Whether this will be as simple as freedom from their wretched lives or an attempt to take them from their prisons I cannot tell.

A ROYAL CONSPIRACY

Intriguing rumours, which I am currently investigating, say the elven cells of the Sisterhood look up to a central cell in Yamere headed by no lesser a person than High Queen Nesa Joi. Astounding. What is known for sure is the organisation as a whole is involved in dozens of plans and conspiracies across Unae to stop the Final Dominion being born. The whispered claim of the Sisterhood, sent to trouble the dreams of so many of us, is that we elves have no divine right to dominate the world and the Ansilsae is false propaganda spread by the Five Faiths. These beliefs and the way the mystics insinuate them into our most private sleeping moments does not help the organisation win support or friends.

COMMON MAGIC

Certain abilities with magic are common to all practitioners; all magic users have learned how to sense the presence of magic, cabalists study the secret language of the Arcana, and priests and mystics both have their ways of detecting the celestial aura of others so that they can sense good and evil in a soul.



ELVEN ARTIFACTS

Elven history is steeped in magic. From the first village and its shaman and minstrel, through the rise and fall of the four ruined dominions and distant Velsana, elven magic was everywhere. Over the course of ten thousand years elven history has seen a steady stream of legendary magical artifacts produced by members of the Cabal, the Five Faiths, the two outlawed religions, the Sisterhood and renegade magicians. Some of the most famous of these artifacts, one from each fallen Dominion and one from Velsana, are detailed here: who created it, why, its powers and where it is today.

THE SKULL OF SENA KALMA

Since the Ansilsae Revelation (year zero on the elven calendar) the elves have been exiled from their true home, Velsana, and the island continent has lain abandoned for over eight thousand years.

According to legend and religious lore, Velsana lies far to the west of Wair-Rae, *if* it still exists; Unae's seas have risen since that legendary era and no-one has dared to return. Cabalists and members of the Sisterhood who scrye over the far horizon report no contact with anything in particular, but others do tell of a dark presence. Regardless of its shameful past, the land of Velsana birthed many treasures, the most famous being the *Skull of Sena Kalma*, a helm made from the skull of the renowned scholar following her execution.

Sena Kalma had warned of the dangers of overcrowding. As the elven population grew so too did its prosperity and peace, but eventually a point was reached where the numbers became unsustainable. The small and isolated continent of Velsana had been a paradise, but after centuries of war and overpopulation it became a decrepit wasteland. Sena Kalma, and other farsighted scholars, foresaw this but her views were forcibly silenced by the rulers of her day.

The arrest and execution of Sena Kalma was undertaken by House Kalfena. This deed marked their emergence from petty nobility into the higher ranks of the elven court. Following the execution Kalma's skull was given to a priest of Dylann who fashioned it into a gold-rimmed helm. The craftsman priest carefully fractured the skull, enlarging the cranial cavity, before dipping it in molten silver making it a gruesome headdress. The helm was then embellished with gold trim and House Kalfena wore it as a symbol of their newly won, but shortly lost power. House Kalfena had no success at court and soon fell into ruin. The symbol of their unjust rule was taken from their ransacked estate by looters.

Since that time on Velsana, the Skull of Sena Kalma has reappeared throughout elven history, being touted in all of the past dominions. Why would someone bother to keep such a thing? The answers are three; firstly it is worth a small fortune, secondly there is great karma and honour in owning a relic of glorious Velsana, and thirdly it is said that the spirit of Sena Kalma resides in the helm. Any who wear the headdress one hour

before sunset can commune with Sena (she was executed in a public beheading one hour before sunset). The lore surrounding the helm also suggests that smoking Qat (the Prabesk smoking leaf) or ingesting red wine blessed by a priest of Dylann will help make the possibility of contact with Sena more certain.

Contact with Sena's spirit is not always as clear cut as might be desired. Instead the Skull may offer only a circus of emotions and empathy, or a dreamlike sequence of visions concerning the future and the holder's life. Rarely is contact with Sena as straightforward and easily understood as a one on one conversation with the scholar's resident spirit.

The helm was in the possession of the Jenn House prior to the rise of the third dominion. From there it seems to have moved to Fiquene House's treasury (most likely with the marriage between the two houses). From that time it is known that the Fiquene faction that fled to Wairanir in an effort to survive the third fall brought the famous helm with them. Since that time it has rarely been sighted or heard of. The Cabal in Wair-Rae say that the Fiquene House are using the Skull to divine the future and plot their treasons as they scheme against the throne of the Fifth and Final Dominion. If it is indeed still in the hands of the Fiquene House, then it is more than likely within the city of Rumaza where the ghost of the betrayed leader of House Jenn, Grae Jenn, is now said to be haunting the head of House Fiquene, Jorin Fiquene.

ISKADAE ARMOUR

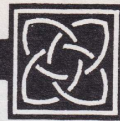
Seven thousand years ago Quo Ungria, the First Elven Dominion, achieved many great things; it was the first era when the elven race acted as a unified force. One of the most spectacular of these achievements was the equipping of the entire honour guard of King Grisias Quo with Winged Armour. Called *Iskadae Armour*, the suits were made by the Cabal as a gift for the king. Enemies of the Cabal like to point out that what King Grisias had to give in return, his entire kingdom, far outweighed the worth of the armours. Pure and pathetic paranoia!

One hundred suits of the magically enchanted armour were made, each giving the wearer the protection of plate armour but with the weight of leather. The suits also gave the wearer the ability to fly with silver-gilded metal wings that folded into the back plates of the armour. These enchanted wings were prepared for use by activating a release pin situated at the base of the breast plate. Once released the wearer only had to will themselves to fly and the carefully cast spells in the helmets were able to translate these mental commands into magical action. Needless to say, a suit by itself is useless if you do not have access to a helmet.

After the assassination of King Grisias by his niece, Fae Cor (then matriarch of the Sisterhood), the disgraced honour guard (having failed their king) fled the falling dominion, reputedly taking their Iskadae Armour with them. All but two of the honour guard (who had taken sides in the civil war) fled Quo Ungria and headed far south with their families and their precious armour. Nothing confirmed has ever been heard of the fleeing guards and their armour since.

The two honour guards who stayed to fight in the civil war were killed in battle, but their suits saved and handed on. One is





today believed to lie in the ruins of Quersic Quor in Kalraith, the other is held in a display case in Pasinotis, the Royal pillar tower in the capital, Yamere. The Cabal claims that the magic to make such a long-lasting and complex thing was only known to those who first produced the artifacts. Even the High King's closest allies in the Wair-Rae Cabal deny that they can make such an incredible treasure.

As word of the suit which is supposed to survive in Kalraith spreads, so too does the number of travelling parties who seek to claim this amazing magical prize. Many dangers await any who try to retrieve this suit from Quersic Quor, namely the *Scavenger* race and the Spirit Queen and her gargoyle nation.

A quaint and easily dismissed footnote to this page in elven history is the belief of an obscure kult in Ungria, the *Uger Iskadae*, who foolishly maintain that they guard the other ninety-eight suits of Iskadae Armour in a hidden sepulchre. They preach that the Final Dominion will bring a day of reckoning for the Sisterhood when the hidden suits will be dusted off, donned by the kultists and used to hunt down and slay the despised mind-warpers. These kultists, like so many others of their ilk, are demented witch-burners and of no account.

NANION NASKAE

Every elf has a *naskae*, an organ that collects the raw stuff of magic. This misty blue sphere which is about an inch across is found inside the body just above the genitalia, buried deep in the flesh. It is also called the Soul Pearl. When an elf starts to follow the corrupt kults of the Terura Kala (the elvish name for Horned God) the pearl changes to a deep and bottomless black.

The High King's charlatan, Waildormin, is such a corrupted individual and it is he who holds the artifact best remembered from the second dominion of Kalraith, the *Nanion Naskae*. The artifact is a set of five rubies, the stones all half an inch across and cut and polished to perfection. They come in a small purple velvet bag with a golden drawstring. These stones give their owner access to greater power, each being embodied with the spirit of six priests of the Terura Kala from the Second Dominion, thirty six in all. To use the Nanion Naskae one must have access to spirit magic. Even then, one must be a very accomplished and strong priest in order to withstand the temptations and corruption of the Terura Kala priests who sacrificed their lives to be part of this terrible artifact. The artifact amplifies the user's basic magic ability by a factor of six, and also bestows six times your natural endurance. In the wrong hands, such as those of the charlatan Waildormin, it can do untold damage. It is probable that he keeps the Nanion Naskae on his person at all times.

THE SWORD OF ANDRASTA

The Third Dominion Jhae Dalin Cor's most famed enchanted artifact is a weapon known as the *Sword of Andrasta*. It was one of a host of blessed weaponry made by the priests of Andrasta. This sword is recognised as the finest elvish blade ever created.

The Sword was forged in the city of Dalin Cor by the legendary weapon smith Fores Bandanae, and blessed by the then High Priestess of Andrasta so that no elf can directly harm its wielder by any means. The Sword was spirited out of the Third Dominion a century before its fall, and sent to the eastern provinces of Ungria. There it was lost to its owner as payment of a large gambling debt, an occurrence that saw it travel to the Kalraith Colonies, and from there with an enlisted man of the Dominion Military, it headed to the Southern Colonies where its owner was killed in battle. The sword is now wielded by the leader of the Southern Elven resistance to the rule of Wair-Rae: Jordo Danmorae is an eighty-two year old elf who has training in druidic magic, but also natural sword play abilities.

MERRAE'S BOW

It is hard to pinpoint what might be the most impressive magical artifact to be produced by such a recent dominion as the fourth, Old Wair-Rae, but it is most likely to be agreed upon by scholars and Cabalists to be *Merrae's Bow*. This lovingly crafted bow was created by High King Caemarou's tutor and mentor, Siverio Merrae. It is very accurate, very light but powerful and very quick to draw.

Merrae also prepared two score arrows that are said to fly undeniably true and *true to heart*, meaning (according to legend) that they will kill any they strike.

One quiver of a score of arrows is still held by High King Caemarou in Yamere. They are among his most treasured possessions, reminding him of his dear departed friend, his parents and an age of childhood innocence so long taken away from him.

As for the bow, that was stolen from Caemarou, along with the other quiver of twenty arrows, three years ago during a royal reception in Yamere. The thief was never found, the only clue being a broken bottle of Flet ale by the weapon's display case, and a trail of crumbed fish that lead to a window on the sixty-eighth level of the Pasinotis pillar tower.

While not widely known, and certainly not within the borders of Wair-Rae, the bow and quiver of arrows was stolen by the young son of an Heletian diplomat. When the incident was discovered by the thief's distraught father he sent him immediately back to Greater Baimiopia to hide the items in the family manor. Two years later, upon the end of his posting in Wair-Rae, the diplomat returned home to Thapsuss and sold the bow and quiver on to the then Reganto of Vangre, Vincenzo Heletiano. Witnesses at the "Siege of Vangre" in 515EK believe they saw an adventurer in Heletiano's employ using the bow to defend the walls, as one arrow from this archer was seen to instantly slay the great ogre shaman, Garrekk, piercing his protective magicks.



Secrets

The secrets seem many, but in truth number only few. It doesn't make them any less terrible I advise you.

One of the secrets relates to the foul horrors of the hive. Thousands of years ago the elves of Kalraith did sin, consorting with devils they sold their spirits. The sane fled while they could. Leaving their brothers, mutating, transforming and changing, finally born anew.

Another secret is the complete slaughter of eight Heletian subcultures and the ongoing genocidal war with the Flets. A story that is slowly emerging into the light.

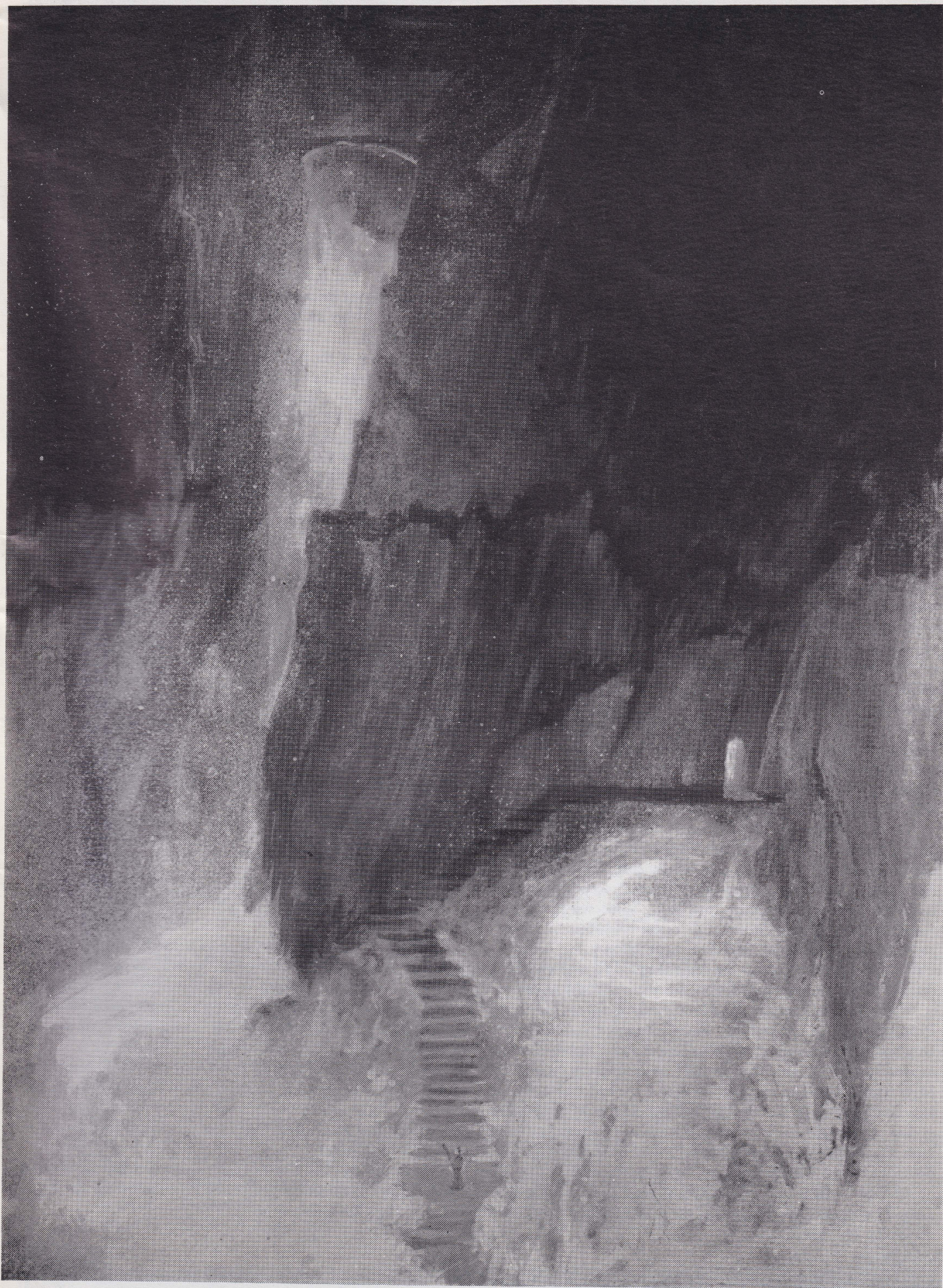
The secret of the Sisterhood which is not even yet known to the High King, one that tells of their treachery and sin. Their conspiracy for influence, power and wealth, their tools being the love given, loyalty and female stealth.

The Stairs are a secret, one barely understood. It is one that is double edged, both foul and good. The celestial stairs lead to the Fifth Dominion, but also to Oblivion and doom, a choice the High King will have to make, to take our people to tomorrow or eternal doom.

The final secret is one so dire that no non-elf should hear it for it will only fuel his anger's fire.

Should we elves reach our Fifth Dominion and our High King walk the celestial stairs, then regardless of which path is chosen, whether it be doom or paradise, all the races of Unae will be sacrificed in allowing us to make such a choice. Their labour and sweat will guarantee our Final Dominion and their blood will power our choice.

All the secrets the elves hold are terrible and foul. If they think they are the masters of Unae then surely this place is hell.





What secrets could we possibly have?

None I tell you. None.

It comes not easily to me to tell of such things so I shall speak of only what is relevant in order to stop High King Caemarou's madness in his quest to become the ruler of the prophesied Fifth and Final Dominion.

Although I betray a sacred trust to my mortal master I am satisfied that in so doing I serve a higher cause.

GENOCIDE

Every person in Dormetia who can claim to be more than a peasant has heard of the rumoured genocide against the Fletlanders. Is it true? Is the Flet version of history correct? Do the elves wish to see them crushed? The answers to all is *yes*.

The Flet version of history, as detailed in the chapter of this compilation titled "Yesterday" is correct. Do we want them crushed? Yes! Not because they are Flets, but because they have long been in our way. Once ensnared in Old Wair-Rae as a labouring class they eventually took more freedom, wishing to live as equals, thereby revoking their rights to live in our land at all. So we pushed them into the sea. Now we need more land as our population grows. Again they are in our way.

Are you shocked? Don't be. There is more, much more.

The genocide against the Flets is a small incident compared to what has occurred in the past. Heletian scholars reading this manuscript will be well aware of your history telling of the original sixteen Heletian tribes and how, over time, with the raising sea levels, many were cut off from each other. Some nations drowned and some were assumed to be killed off by the ogre clans. This is not the truth.

Two centuries ago, after the first Heletian contact with the world-travelling Prabesk merchants, the surviving eight Heletian nations who had formed their trading league were finally reunited with the ninth tribe, a group low in numbers yet still alive and well. The question remained: What of the other seven tribes?

The fact is they were all accounted for by the elves - enslaved or slaughtered by our Second and Third Dominions. Worse still, one of these tribes still exists, perpetually enslaved in Wair-Rae. After many generations of repression, cross-breeding with Flets and other subject human races, and being subjected to magical manipulation, this remnant tribe no longer resembles in culture, language or willpower its Heletian League fellows.

We elves have blood on our hands, and all I can say in our defence is that life is a competition, the survival of the fittest.

While this will make the blood boil of some, for those Heletians who are not seething enough I remind you that it has been less than two years since Wair-Rae took the eighth Heletian League state of Ossard. This military campaign was ordered by High King Caemarou because the city-state had embraced the Horned God. Due to the corruption of the citizens of Ossard (the giving of themselves to the kulta), when our victorious forces took the doomed city every Heletian found within its walls was put to the sword. The only fit cure for such corruption.

Of the Heletians only eight tribes remain, the seven Heletian League states, plus the remnants of the wanderer tribe to be found across the Tempestus Sea.

THE FIFTH WAR

According to the Ansilsae the end of the Fifth War will mark the coming of age of the Fifth and Final Dominion.

The upcoming war to be waged against the Heletian League will be the First War. The Second, Third and Fourth Wars will be in the future waged against Unae's other powerful nations - the *Orient*, the *Prabeq Empire* and *Hindia* - for control of the lands that they dominate. The Fifth War will rage across Unae in over a hundred places and it shall be a campaign of final and total annihilation of any forces that remain standing against the Fifth Dominion. It is this secret which should alarm the people of Unae most of all.

The prophecy of the Final Dominion calls for a final battle to cleanse all of Unae and secure it for the eternal dominion of the elves. Such a war will only be successfully fought (as the prophecy describes) if all other races are taken into slavery and purged. We are talking about the genocide of every sentient race on Unae. By this time the elves will be unstoppable. The prophecy calls on Blood Magic to be used by the elven Sango Drajo using the sacrifice of non-elves to power their mighty castings. When the Fifth and Final Battle of the Fifth War comes the unleashing of Blood Magic will accelerate exponentially as the elves claim more victims which will in turn give them more power to take more victims.

While the average elf is not prone to blood-lust the prophecy allows for this also. The priesthood of the Five Faiths will devise blessings and rituals that will energise the armies of the High King so that they are able to wage the relentless and ruthless war called for in the Ansilsae. The elven race will elevate itself to a higher plane, becoming near divine. The death screams of the non-elven millions of Unae put to the sword will also be the birth cry of the Final Dominion.

Finally, as the divine turbulence from the deaths of these millions clears, the elves will be revealed to the cosmos as a nation-race of gods, raising their own gods of the Five Faiths to a pedestal that is so powerful that what they will become is beyond mortal understanding.

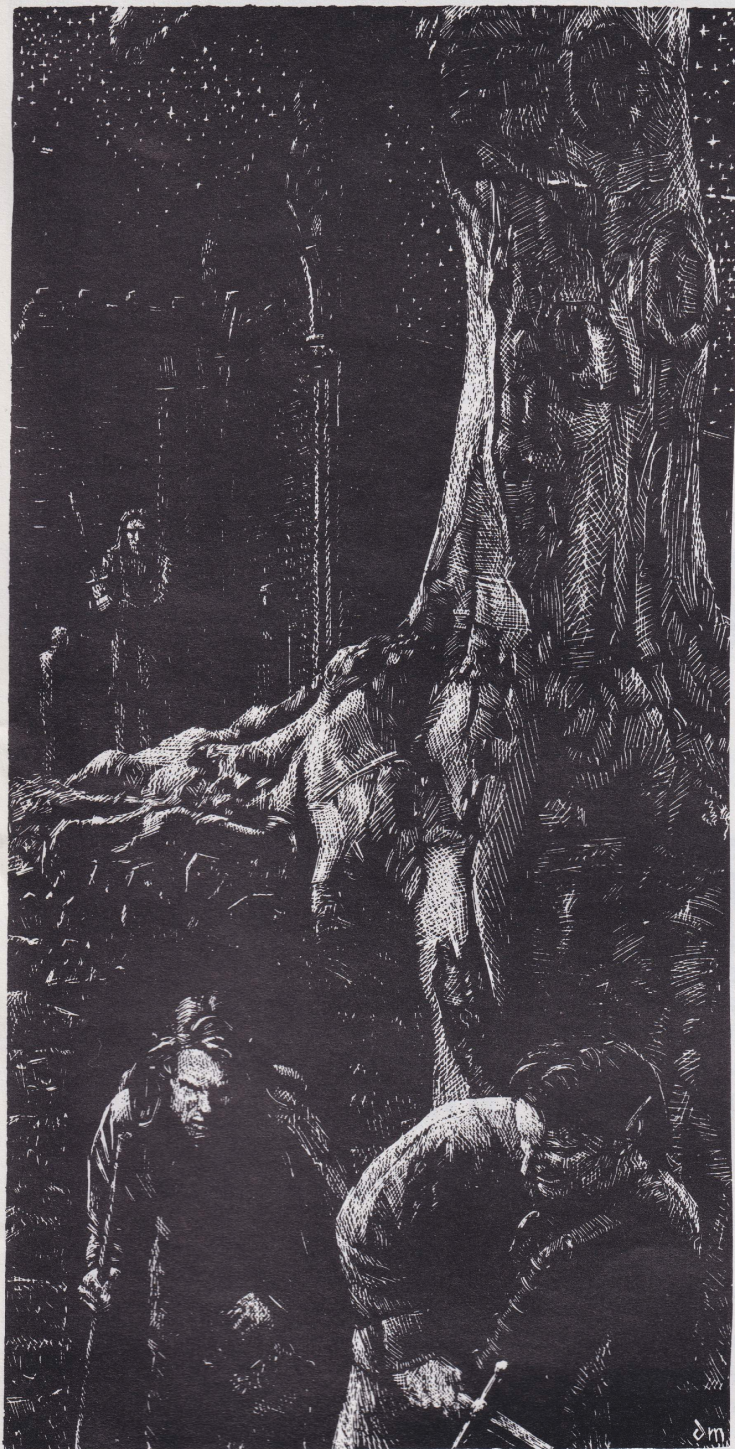
THE SISTERHOOD

Whispers continually do the rounds in the high circles of power of a conspiracy led by the Sisterhood to subvert the Ansilsae. Nothing is known for certain, and my researches continue, but it seems these growing rumours may become as significant to we elves as the Cabalist Conspiracy and subsequent Expulsion was to the Heletian League.

While no elf has ever been persecuted for brandishing their natural magical or mystical talents it would seem, if the rumours persist and some solid proof is unearthed by the enemies of the Sisterhood, that the Sisters and their cells could be forced to disband or be destroyed.

For reasons that I still do not fully understand the Sisterhood consider their main enemies to be the Five Faiths and the Royal House of High King Caemarou.





THE GARGOYLES

The hidden truth of the Fall of the Second Dominion is that it was caused by the perversion and corruption rife at the core of that nation. Allowing their deepest inner desires to take root, the elves of Kalraith turned to malevolent powers to express themselves, and these powers not only twisted their reality but their very souls, turning their naskae purple-black. The people of Kalraith became followers of the Terura Kala. This corruption led to the destruction of Kalraith, and the capital province's subsequent inhabitation by the gargoyles and their Spirit Queen.

While little is known for certain regarding the secrets of the gargoyles it is speculated that they are incarnations of elven spirits trapped on Unae and forbidden to reach the afterlife due to their corruption by the Sixth Faith. To some these trapped spirits, the gargoyles, are serving a penance by being forced to stay in Kalraith amidst the ruins of their fall. Little is known for sure but there are several examples of the gargoyles helping the elves. At Ossard, for instance, the Spirit Queen herself took to the skies to aid the forces of Prince Dalsior in his taking of the Heletian League city-state. This aid seems to strengthen the gargoyle's claim of kinship.

THE STAIRS

This is the last of our secrets that I am willing to share with you. A final irony for the doomed of Unae - the Choice of Stairs.

Should the elves reach this point of near divinity after sacrificing the entire population of Unae in founding the Final Dominion they must still choose the correct path. The trail to the higher plane is described in the Ansilsae as a staircase with two branches. One path leads to a better world, the elven afterlife which in their higher state they will be able to travel to and from at will, and the other leads to doom. So, should the elves fail in their choice, they will have consigned the population of Unae and themselves to fires of eternal oblivion - *all for nothing*.

This would be the final judgment of the elven pantheon on its children.

Here ends Forwao's First Chronicle of Wair-Rae.

It is 516 EK and Autumn embraces Unae. A time of change.



THE JOURNALS OF NALDIN THREE-FINGERS

KALRAITH

UNAE BOOK TWO

The second Unae book is a campaign sourcebook set in the crumbling ruins of the Second Elvish Dominion, Kalraith. Join Naldin Three-Fingers, Unae's number one tomb robber, as he leads a party of explorers and adventurers to retrieve some of the fabled elvish wonders of Kalraith.

This campaign length adventure takes the players from Wair-Rae, into troubled Fletland, then on an overland trek through the hostile ogre and orc infested Varm Carga mountains, down into the dark, forested ruins of mysterious Kalraith and ultimately into and under the monumental troiths of the Spirit Queen's Gargoyle Nation.

Come discover the secrets that lie in the savage underbelly of Unae - gargoyles, the Spirit Queen, spirit magic; lost elvish treasures, monsters, new kults, the scavenger race and more on the conflict between Wair-Rae and Fletland.

OUT THIS SUMMER!

SUBSCRIBE TO AUSTRALIAN REALMS

And we'll keep you up to date with all the latest developments in the Unae campaign world. Watch as mad High Kings Caemarou's plans of war unfold. See the elves swarm over Dormetia, watch as Greater Baimiopia and the Heletian League mobilises their defences. Learn more about the Cabal's secret plans, the Sisterhood's intrigues and the ongoing struggle between the state Faiths and the Kults. Adventure and excitement guaranteed every issue in Australian Realms the bimonthly roleplaying supplement.

SUBSCRIPTION:

6 issues \$30.00 ☐ 12 issues \$60.00 ☐

OVERSEAS SUBSCRIBERS Please add Air Mail \$4.00 per issue; Economy Air \$3.20 per issue; or Surface \$1.50 per issue.

BACK ISSUES Back issues (1 to 28) are \$4.95 each except issues 3 & 4 which are \$3.95 each and issue 29 which is \$6.00. I require issue #'s _____

A-TEAM MINIATURES \$3.00 each or \$13.00 for the set of six. Mango ☐ Virgil ☐ Shana ☐ Spud ☐ Wilson ☐ Zeek ☐

A-TEAM ANNUAL \$15.00 ☐

Pay cheques to: Australian Realms, PO Box 220, Morley, WA 6943.

NAME _____ Total To Pay \$: _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL _____

Bankcard/Mastercard/Visa No:

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

"Have YOU subscribed?"



AUSTRALIA REALMS

FORWAO's CHRONICLE OF WAIR-RAE

**"One day soon all the world's little wars
will join hands and Unae will be flooded
by a sea of blood"**

WAIR-RAE is the first UNAE sourcebook and tells the story of the elves of Wair-Rae who are driven by the ambition of mad High King Caemarou to achieve the prophesy of the Ansilsae, a ten-thousand year old divine promise that the elves will inherit this world and ascend to paradise... over the millions of dead of all the other races of Unae.

WAIR-RAE reveals the secrets of the elves, their history, their dominions, their faith, their magic, their future.

A sourcebook for all fantasy roleplaying games.

**AUSTRALIAN REALMS
PO BOX 200 MORLEY WA 6943**

